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THE

Political Writings

OF

THOMAS PAINE,

SECRETARY TO THE COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

CHARLESTOWN (Ms.)

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY GEORGE DAVIDSON.

1824.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present edition of Mr. Paine's political writings contains a number of his works never before published in any American edition. It has been the object of the present publisher to include in it all his writings which are not obnoxious to personal or religious objections. His "Letter to General Washington" was omitted because it was believed to have been written during a time of great irritation of mind, occasioned by his imprisonment, while in France, and from a misconception of the motives which induced Washington to refrain from interfering to obtain his release. Previous to that, he had always professed the highest respect for, and admiration of, that great man's character and talents.

Some letters, addressed "to the people of the United States," written after his return to this country, in 1802, were excluded because they relate to the party disputes of the day, and are barren of interest at the present time.

With the above exceptions, the first volume contains all his writings which treat on American affairs.

The second volume contains all his European publications, which could be obtained, and comprises all that are of any importance.

It was only intended to give the most prominent parts of Mr. Paine's life, in the Sketch which is prefixed to the first volume.

Charlestown, Mass. August, 1824.

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A

BRIEF SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE OF THOMAS PAINE.

THOMAS PAINE was born in Thetford, county of Norfolk, England, in January, 1737. His father was a staymaker by trade, and professed the Quaker system of religion. His parents were respectable though poor, which prevented their giving him a college education. All the learning which he possessed, was obtained at a common English grammar school.

He left school when he was about thirteen and went to work with his father, at staymaking, where he continued two or three years. He then went to London, and afterwards to Dover, working at his trade a few weeks in each place. About this time he entered on board a privateer, but was prevented from going in her, as he says, "by the affectionate and moral remonstrances of his father." Dissatisfied, however, with his profession, he soon after entered and sailed in the privateer Terrible. How long he was absent is uncertain.

In the year 1759, he settled at Sandwich, as a master-staymaker, and married Mary Lambert, who died the next year.

He obtained a situation in the excise in 1761, which he retained till 1774.

In 1771, he married Elizabeth Olive; he lived with her but a short time; a separation took place, the real cause of which, although a number have been assigned, as is usual in such cases,

probably was never known to the public. After the separation from his wife, he went to London, where he procured an introduction to Dr. Franklin, who advised him to go to America; this advice he followed, and arrived in Philadelphia about the close of the year 1774. Here his political career commenced.

His first engagement was with Mr. Aitkin, a bookseller, who established the Pennsylvania Magazine in January, 1775, which Paine edited for some time with great ability. His monody on the *Death of Gen. Wolfe*, and *Reflections on the death of lord Clive*, were first published in this magazine, and contributed much to its popularity. At this time he became acquainted with, and visited, many people of the first rank; among whom were Franklin, Rittenhouse, G. Clymer, Dr. Rush, and others.

It was Dr. Rush who suggested to him the idea of writing *Common Sense*, which was published in January, 1776; and, as the doctor says, "bursted from the press with an effect which has rarely been produced by types and paper in any age or country." Before this work was published it was submitted to the inspection of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Samuel Adams, and other distinguished patriots, who spoke in the highest terms of it.

In the summer and autumn of 1776, he served as a volunteer in the American army, under Gen. Washington, and associated with officers of the first class.

The first number of *The Crisis* was published December, 1776, and had a most invigorating effect on the spirits of the army, of public bodies, and of private citizens. "These," said *The Crisis*, "are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country, but he that stands it *now*, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

Three numbers of *The Crisis* were published in the year 1777, with the same success as the first.

On the 17th of April, 1777, Paine was elected Secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, which office he held twenty-one months. He also acted as clerk to the legislature of Pennsylvania about the year 1780.

Three more numbers of *The Crisis* were published in 1778; three in 1780, in which year he wrote the pamphlet entitled *Public Good*, on the claim of Virginia to the Western Territory.

In 1782, four numbers of *The Crisis* appeared. The two last were written in 1783.

In February, 1781, Mr. Paine accompanied Col. Laurens to France, where they obtained for the United States a loan of ten millions of livres, and a present of six millions. On his return he published his *Letter to the abbe Raynal.*

When the army was about to be disbanded in 1783, Washington used all his influence to obtain from Congress some compensation for the services which Paine had rendered the country by his revolutionary writings. In August, 1785, Congress passed the following resolution. "Resolved, that the early, unsolicited, and continued labors of Mr. Thomas Paine, in explaining and enforcing the principles of the late revolution, by ingenious and timely publications upon the nature of liberty and civil government, have been well received by the citizens of these states, and merit the approbation of Congress; and that in consideration of these services, and the benefits produced thereby, Mr. Paine is entitled to a liberal gratification from the United States." This *liberal* gratification was three thousand dollars; which was all the compensation he ever received from government.

Some have supposed that he applied personally to Congress for remuneration for his writings, and have condemned him on that ground, as evincing a sordid disposition; but if he did do so, it rather throws a stigma upon that government, which, knowing his circumstances, reduced him to the necessity of reminding it of its duty. Very few men render services to any country without being paid for them; some get money, and others, who happen to have that, get fame and honors. There is a vast difference between a *poor* patriot and a *rich* one: both may act from the same motives and yet get different appellations.

Paine also received from the state of Pennsylvania 500*l.* currency; and from New-York a fine estate of 300 acres of land, with all necessary buildings attached to it; situated in New-Rochelle, West Chester county.

Dissertations on Government, the affairs of the Bank, and Paper Money was published in 1786. The occasion of it was as follows: In the year 1780, when the British army had overrun the southern states; when the finances of the country were exhausted; and the American army were in the greatest distress, a

voluntary subscription for its relief was proposed in Philadelphia. The amount raised in this way was three hundred thousand pounds;* which was afterwards converted into a bank by the subscribers, headed by Robert Morris, and supplied the wants of the army. This supply was probably instrumental in enabling Washington to carry into effect his well-concerted plan against Cornwallis. This bank was incorporated by Congress, in 1781, and further incorporated by an act of the Pennsylvania legislature the following year.

"When the war was over—when extreme distress had ceased, and the services which the bank had rendered were forgotten, it was attacked as an institution incompatible with individual prosperity, and public safety. The legislature of Pennsylvania was urgently petitioned to repeal their act of incorporation. The petitions were referred to a *select* committee, who reported in favor of its repeal. Here was an attempt, under the pretence of promoting liberty, happiness and safety, to violate them all by a most tyrannical invasion of private property! Paine, very unceremoniously and vigorously, assailed both the assembly and its petitioners, and probably averted the act of *despotism* which the *freemen* were about to commit."

Paine sailed from the United States, in April 1787, for France, where he exhibited the model of a bridge, of his invention, to the Academy of Sciences. From France he passed over to England, and arrived in London, Sept. 1787. He visited his mother at Thetford, whom he supported while he remained in the country.

While in England, Paine became acquainted with Mr. Thomas Walker, of Manchester, the friend and companion of Fox. He was a liberal encourager of the arts; and with his assistance Paine was enabled to have an arch of his bridge cast in iron, at Rotherham, in Yorkshire. The bridge obtained for him a high reputation among the mathematicians of Europe.

Early in the year 1788, he published in London, *Prospects on the Rubicon.* The United Provinces and France being embroiled with Prussia, it was supposed that England would be drawn into the quarrel. It was written on this subject.

* Mr. Paine subscribed 500*l.*

The *Rights of Man*, part first, was published in London, in March, 1791, and gained as much popularity in England, as his *Common Sense* had in the United States.

In February, 1792, the second part of the *Rights of Man* was published in London. In May, of the same year, the king issued a proclamation for suppressing all "seditious and libellous works;" designating none, but evidently aiming at the *Rights of Man*. The attorney-general commenced a prosecution the same day against Paine, as the author.

His trial was to come on the following December. In September, preceding, a French deputation announced to him his election to the National Convention, from the department of Calais. He immediately left England; but his trial came on as if he were present—for libellous passages in the *Rights of Man*, and of course a verdict of guilty was rendered. It is never very difficult for the British government, in state prosecutions, to have a verdict awarded in its favor.

In the National Convention, Paine voted for the trial of Louis XVI. and on the trial, delivered a speech in favor of preserving his life.

The French Convention, in December, 1793, passed a decree for the expulsion of all members from it who were foreigners by birth; and by consequence Paine was expelled. This decree was followed by another the same month, for imprisoning every man in France who was born in England. Under this decree he was thrown into prison. He had just finished the first part of the *Age of Reason*, which he left with Mr. Barlow, when he was arrested. His confinement lasted eleven months, from Dec. 1793, to Nov. 1794. After his liberation he found an asylum in the house of Mr. Munroe, the American minister in France, where he continued eighteen months. He resumed his seat in the National Convention, on the invitation of that body.

His next work was a pamphlet *On the English system of Finance*, published April, 1796. In July following, he published his *Letter to General Washington*. In this, it is to be regretted that he suffered himself to abuse Gen. Washington, if not causelessly, at least ungenerously. The chief reason assigned was, that Washington did not make any exertion to obtain his liberation from prison. It is well known that the critical

situation of our affairs, at that time, both with England and France, precluded the possibility of interfering in his behalf, without endangering the peace of the country. Some excuse may be found for Paine, in the fact of his confinement eleven months in a French prison. It is well calculated to engender unfavorable feelings towards others.

In October, 1796, he published the second part of the *Age of Reason*, and in the year following, a *Letter to the Hon. Thomas Erskine*, a pamphlet entitled *Agrarian Justice*, and a *Letter to the people and armies of France*. This was his last publication in France.

Paine now wished to return to the United States, which was no easy matter: the fleets of Great Britain covered the ocean, having received orders to search for him in all vessels leaving France. He made arrangements for accompanying Mr. Munroe home, which circumstances, fortunately for him, prevented; as the vessel in which he embarked was boarded by a British frigate and strictly searched. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to procure a safe passage, he finally succeeded, and arrived at Baltimore, Oct. 30, 1802. From thence he went to Washington, where he continued five or six months. While there he wrote several letters, addressed *To the people of the United States.*

Besides the works here enumerated, Paine was the author of several minor productions, and among them a number of pieces of poetry; the best of which are the monody *on the death of Gen. Wolfe*, and the *Castle in the Air*.

In May, 1803, he went to New-York, with the intention of residing there. His estate in New-Rochelle, West Chester county, had greatly increased in value during his absence of fourteen years. Here and in the city of New-York, he resided till his death, which occurred in the latter place. He was removed to New-Rochelle and buried on his estate, and this inscription, at his own request, placed on his tombstone. "Thomas Paine, author of *Common Sense:* died June 8th, 1809, aged 72 years and 5 months."

Probably no man ever was more abused by writers than Thomas Paine. Nothing like an impartial history of his life and writings has been published: he seems, according to his biographers, a *rara avis;* a man without one good quality;—who lived more

than seventy years without ever performing one good action with a good intention. Some occurrences, on which it would be ridiculous in men of sense not to bestow praise, they have, wisely for their plan, passed slightly over. But invariably where there was room to hang a doubt, they have attributed the worst of motives to him.

That his publications during the American revolution, were of eminent service to this country cannot be disputed. And although now every one is familiar with, and advocates the sentiments contained in them, it should be recollected that they were nearly original, and dangerous to be acknowledged, at that time When Common Sense was written it was very difficult to get any one in Philadelphia who would run the risk of printing it. A Scotchman was at last induced to undertake it.

Some of our greatest men have borne testimony to the efficacy of this work. Among them, Ramsay, in his History of the Revolution, says—"Nothing could have been better timed than this performance (Common Sense.) In unison with the feelings and sentiments of the people, it has produced surprising effects. Many thousands were convinced, and were led to approve and long for a separation from the mother country." And Gordon says, "No publication has so much promoted the spirit of independency as Common Sense. It has produced most astonishing effects."

The numbers of the Crisis were intended to invigorate the spirits of the Americans; show the necessity of a strict Union of the States; the importance of combined operations;—or ridicule the attempts of Great Britain to subjugate this country while so united. Among the latter, the one addressed to lord Howe stands conspicuous, as a most finished piece of sarcastic rebuke.

Of his European political publications, much has been and may be said. That the government of Great Britain was then, and is now, corrupt—that the great body of the people are oppressed for the benefit of the few—that the people *in fact* have no influence in the administration; being always opposed by a large majority of members in both houses of parliament *bought* for the purpose—and that they are borne down to the dust by taxation, is well known to those who wish to know it.

Paine's object was to open the eyes of the people to a proper sense of their rights. To prove to them that it was lawful to

remove any and every one from office when they ceased to act for the good of the community. To show them, that a king, if tolerated at all, was the servant of a people,—bound to direct their affairs with a view to their best interests, and not waste their wealth and sacrifice their lives in foreign intrigues and wars, for his individual fame.

That his writings on this subject tended to, and came very near producing, a revolution in that country, is certain. And nothing but a complete revolution can reinstate the people in their rights. Petitions and remonstrances are worse than useless, as has been seen in innumerable instances, and among the number North-America was one: all the ability of the country was put in requisition to *supplicate* for a redress of grievances, and what was the result? Derision and contempt. Inveterate diseases cannot be cured by the application of milk and water; the remedy must be proportioned to their virulence.

The most unfortunate thing for Paine's reputation was the publication of his Age of Reason. There is nothing to palliate it; nor one good argument that can be urged in its favor. It could never do any good even if it could not be controverted. It levels the present system of Christianity without proposing any other in its stead; and brings into contempt and ridicule a book which for the interest of the world should be held in reverence.

COMMON SENSE:

ADDRESSED TO THE INHABITANTS OF AMERICA, ON THE FOLLOWING INTERESTING SUBJECTS, VIZ.

I. Of the origin and design of government in general; with concise remarks on the English constitution.

II. Of monarchy and hereditary succession.

III. Thoughts on the present state of American affairs.

IV. Of the present ability of America; with some miscellaneous reflections.

To which is added an Appendix.

Man knows no master save creating heaven,
Or those whom choice and common good ordain.

Thomson.

INTRODUCTION.

PERHAPS the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not *yet* sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favor; a long habit of not thinking a thing *wrong*, gives it a superficial appearance of being *right*, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defence of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.

As a long and violent abuse of power is generally the means of calling the right of it in question, (and in matters too which might never have been thought of, had not the sufferers been aggravated into the inquiry) and as the king of England hath undertaken in his *own right*, to support the parliament in what he calls *theirs*, and as the good people of this country are grievously oppressed by the combination, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions of both, and equally to reject the usurpations of either.

In the following sheets, the author hath studiously avoided every thing which is personal among ourselves. Compliments as well as censure to individuals make no part thereof. The wise and the worthy need not the triumph of a pamphlet; and those whose senti-

ments are injudicious or unfriendly, will cease of themselves, unless too much pains is bestowed upon their conversion.

The cause of America is, in a great measure, the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which, their affections are interested. The laying a country desolate with fire and sword, declaring war against the natural rights of all mankind, and extirpating the defenders thereof from the face of the earth, is the concern of every man to whom nature hath given the power of feeling; of which class, regardless of party censure, is

THE AUTHOR.

PHILADELPHIA, *Feb.* 14, 1776.

COMMON SENSE.

ON THE ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF GOVERNMENT IN GENERAL; WITH CONCISE REMARKS ON THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION.

SOME writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively*, by uniting our affections, the latter *negatively*, by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last is a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by *a government*, which we might expect in a country *without government*, our calamity is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built upon the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform and and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other

lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. *Wherefore*, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows, that whatever *form* thereof appears most likely to insure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest, they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto; the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness, but *one* man might labor out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want would call him a different way. Disease, nay, even misfortune, would be death, for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each another; but as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government, to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a state-house, under the branches of which the whole colony may assemble

to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of *Regulations*, and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament, every man, by natural right, will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns trifling. This will point out the convenience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would were they present. If the colony continue increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of the representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number; and that the *elected* might never form to themselves an interest separate from the *electors*, prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often; because as the *elected* might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the *electors* in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this (not on the unmeaning name of King) depends the *strength of government, and the happiness of the governed.*

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too, is the design and end of government, *viz.* freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show, or our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and reason will say, it is right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature, which no art can overturn, *viz.* that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with

this maxim in view, I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected, is granted. When the world was overrun with tyranny, the least remove therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments, (though the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, that they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs, know likewise the remedy, and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

1st, The remains of monarchical tyranny in the person of the king.

2d, The remains of aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.

3d, The new republican materials, in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the people; wherefore in a *constitutional sense* they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the state.

To say that the constitution of England is a union of three powers, reciprocally checking each other, is farcical; either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the commons is a check upon the king, presupposes two things:

1st, That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after; or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.

2d, That the commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the commons a power to check the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the king a power to check the commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the world, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, by unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus; the king, say they, is one, the people another; the peers are an house in behalf of the king: the commons in behalf of the people; but this hath all the distinctions of an house divided against itself: and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind, for this explanation includes a previous question, *viz. How came the king by a power which the people are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check?* Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power *which needs checking*, be from God; yet the provision, which the constitution makes, supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *felo de se;* for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern; and though the others, or a part of them, may clog, or as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavors will be ineffectual; the first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions is self-evident; wherefore, though we have been wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen, in favor of their own government by king, lords, and commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries, but the *will* of the king is as much the *law* of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the formidable shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles I. hath only made kings more subtle—not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favor of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that *it is wholly owing to the constitution of the people, and not the constitution of the government*, that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the *constitutional errors* in the English form of government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by an obstinate prejudice. And as a man who is attached to a prostitute is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favor of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

OF MONARCHY AND HEREDITARY SUCCESSION.

MANKIND being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstance; the distinctions of rich and poor, may in a great measure be accounted for, and that without having recourse to the harsh, ill-sounding names of avarice and

oppression. Oppression is often the *consequence*, but seldom or never the *means* of riches; and though avarice will preserve a man from being necessitously poor, it generally makes him too timorous to be wealthy.

But there is another and greater distinction, for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is, the distinction of men into *kings* and *subjects*. Male and female are the distinctions of nature; good and bad the distinctions of heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth inquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind.

In the early ages of the world, according to the scripture chronology, there were no kings; the consequence of which was there were no wars; it is the pride of kings which throws mankind into confusion. Holland without a king hath enjoyed more peace for this last century than any of the monarchical governments of Europe. Antiquity favors the same remark; for the quiet and rural lives of the first patriarchs hath a happy something in them, which vanishes when we come to the history of Jewish royalty.

Government by kings was first introduced into the world by the heathen, from whom the children of Israel copied the custom. It was the most prosperous invention that ever was set on foot for the promotion of idolatry. The heathen paid divine honors to their deceased kings, and the Christian world hath improved on the plan by doing the same to their living ones. How impious is the title of *sacred majesty*, applied to a worm, who in the midst of his splendor is crumbling into dust!

As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest, cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of scripture; for the will of the Almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of government by kings. All anti-monarchical parts of scripture have been very smoothly glossed over in monarchical governments, but they undoubtedly merit the attention of countries, which have their governments yet to form. "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," is the scripture doctrine of courts, yet it is no support of monarchical government, for the Jews at that time were without a king, and in a state of vassalage to the Romans.

Near three thousand years passed away, from the Mosaic account of the creation, till the Jews, under a national delusion, requested a king. Till then, their form of government (except in extraordinary cases, where the Almighty interposed) was a kind of republic, administered by a judge and the elders of the tribes. Kings they had none, and it was held sinful to acknowledge any being under that title but the Lord of Hosts. And when a man seriously reflects on the idolatrous homage which is paid to the persons of kings, he need not wonder that the Almighty, ever jealous of his honor, should disapprove of a form of government which so impiously invades the prerogative of heaven.

Monarchy is ranked in scripture as one of the sins of the Jews, for which a curse in reserve is denounced against them. The history of that transaction is worth attending to.

The children of Israel being oppressed by the Midianites, Gideon marched against them with a small army, and victory, through the divine interposition, decided in his favor. The Jews, elate with success, and attributing it to the generalship of Gideon, proposed making him a king, saying, "rule thou over us, thou and thy son, and thy son's son." Here was temptation in its fullest extent; not a kingdom only, but an hereditary one; but Gideon in the piety of his soul replied, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you. *The Lord shall rule over you.*" Words need not be more explicit; Gideon doth not *decline* the honor, but denieth their right to give it; neither doth he compliment them with invented declarations of his thanks, but in the positive style of a prophet charges them with disaffection to their proper sovereign, the king of heaven.

About one hundred and thirty years after this, they fell again into the same error. The hankering which the Jews had for the idolatrous customs of the heathen, is something exceedingly unaccountable; but so it was, that laying hold of the misconduct of Samuel's two sons, who were entrusted with some secular concerns, they came in an abrupt and clamorous manner to Samuel, saying, "Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways, now make us a king to judge us like all the other nations." And here we cannot but observe that their motives were bad, *viz.* that they might be *like* unto other nations, *i.e.* the hea-

then, whereas their true glory lay in being as much *unlike* them as possible. "But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, give us a king to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord said unto Samuel, hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, *that I should not reign over them.* According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them out of Egypt, even unto this day; wherewith they have forsaken me and served other gods; so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice, howbeit, protest solemnly unto them and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them," (*i.e.* not of any particular king, but the general manner of the kings of the earth, whom Israel was so eagerly copying after. And notwithstanding the great distance of time and difference of manners, the character is still in fashion.) "And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people, that asked of him a king. And he said, this shall be the manner of the king that shall reign over you; he will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen, and some shall run before his chariots," (this description agrees with the present mode of impressing men) "and he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots; and he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers," (this describes the expense and luxury as well as the oppression of kings) "and he will take your fields and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants; and he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give them to his officers and to his servants," (by which we see that bribery, corruption and favoritism are the standing vices of kings) "and he will take the tenth of your men servants, and your maid servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work; and he will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants, and ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen, *and the Lord will not hear you in that day.*" This accounts for the continuation of monarchy; neither do the characters of the few good kings which have lived since, either sanctify the title, or blot out

the sinfulness of the origin; the high encomium given of David takes no notice of him *officially as a king*, but only as a *man* after God's own heart. "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel, and they said, nay, but we will have a king over us, that we may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." Samuel continued to reason with them but to no purpose; he set before them their ingratitude, but all would not avail; and seeing them fully bent on their folly, he cried out, "I will call unto the Lord, and he shall send thunder and rain" (which was then a punishment, being in the time of wheat harvest) "that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, *in asking you a king*. So Samuel called unto the Lord, and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day, and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel. And all the people said unto Samuel, pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God that we die not, for *we have added unto our sins this evil, to ask a king*." These portions of scripture are direct and positive. They admit of no equivocal construction. That the Almighty hath here entered his protest against monarchical government is true, or the scripture is false. And a man hath good reason to believe, that there is as much of kingcraft, as priestcraft, in withholding the scripture from the public in popish countries. For monarchy in every instance is the popery of government.

To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession; and as the first is a degradation and lessening of ourselves, so the second, claimed as a matter of right, is an insult and imposition on posterity. For all men being originally equals, no *one* by *birth*, could have a right to set up his own family, in perpetual preference to all others for ever, and though himself might deserve *some* degree of honors of his contemporaries, yet his descendants might be far too unworthy to inherit them. One of the strongest *natural* proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule, by giving mankind an *ass* for a *lion*.

Secondly, as no man at first could possess more public honors than were bestowed upon him, so the givers of those honors could have no power to give away the right of posterity, and though they might say, "We choose you for

our head," they could not without manifest injustice to their children, say, that "your children and your children's children shall reign over *ours* for ever." Because such an unwise, unjust, unnatural compact might (perhaps) in the next succession put them under the government of a rogue or a fool. Most wise men in their private sentiments, have ever treated hereditary right with contempt; yet it is one of those evils, which when once established is not easily removed; many submit from fear, others from superstition, and the more powerful part shares with the king, the plunder of the rest.

This is supposing the present race of kings in the world to have had an honorable origin; whereas it is more than probable, that, could we take off the dark covering of antiquity, and trace them to their first rise, we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners, or pre-eminence in subtlety obtained him the title of chief among plunderers; and who by increasing in power, and extending his depredations, overawed the quiet and defenceless to purchase their safety by frequent contributions. Yet his electors could have no idea of giving hereditary right to his descendants, because such a perpetual exclusion of themselves was incompatible with the free and unrestrained principles they professed to live by. Wherefore, hereditary succession in the early ages of monarchy could not take place as a matter of claim, but as something casual or complimental; but as few or no records were extant in those days, and traditionary history stuffed with fables, it was very easy, after the lapse of a few generations, to trump up some superstitious tale, conveniently timed, Mahomet-like, to cram hereditary right down the throats of the vulgar. Perhaps the disorders which threatened, or seemed to threaten, on the decease of a leader and the choice of a new one (for elections among ruffians could not be very orderly) induced many at first to favor hereditary pretensions; by which means it happened, as it hath happened since, that what at first was submitted to as a convenience, was afterwards claimed as a right.

England, since the conquest, hath known some few good monarchs, but groaned beneath a much larger number of bad ones; yet no man in his senses can say that their claim under William the Conqueror is a very honorable one. A French bastard, landing with an armed banditti,

and establishing himself king of England against the consent of the natives, is, in plain terms, a very paltry, rascally original.—It certainly hath no divinity in it. However, it is needless to spend much time in exposing the folly of hereditary right; if there are any so weak as to believe it, let them promiscuously worship the ass and the lion, and welcome. I shall neither copy their humility, nor disturb their devotion.

Yet I should be glad to ask, how they suppose kings came at first? The question admits but of three answers, *viz.* either by lot, by election, or by usurpation. If the first king was taken by lot, it establishes a precedent for the next, which excludes hereditary succession. Saul was by lot, yet the succession was not hereditary, neither does it appear from that transaction that there was any intention it ever should. If the first king of any country was by election, that likewise establishes a precedent for the next; for to say, that the right of all future generations is taken away, by the act of the first electors, in their choice not only of a king, but of a family of kings for ever, hath no parallel in or out of scripture but the doctrine of original sin, which supposes the free will of all men lost in Adam; and from such comparison, and it will admit of no other, hereditary succession can derive no glory. For as in Adam all sinned, and as in the first electors all men obeyed; as in the one all mankind were subjected to satan, and in the other to sovereignty; as our innocence was lost in the first, and our authority in the last; and as both disable us from re-assuming some former state and privilege, it unanswerably follows, that original sin and hereditary succession are parallels. Dishonorable rank! Inglorious connexion! Yet the most subtile sophist cannot produce a juster simile.

As to usurpation, no man will be so hardy as to defend it; and that William the Conqueror was an usurper is a fact not to be contradicted. The plain truth is, that the antiquity of English monarchy will not bear looking into.

But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it ensure a race of good and wise men, it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest

ınkind, their minds are early poisoned by importance; he world they act in differs so materially from the l at large, that they have but little opportunity of ing its true interests, and when they succeed to the ·nment, are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of hroughout the dominions.

other evil which attends hereditary succession is, that ırone is subject to be possessed by a minor at any all which time the regency, acting under the cover of g, have every opportunity and inducement to betray trust. The same national misfortune happens, when ;, worn out with age and infirmity, enters the last stage ıman weakness. In both these cases the public be- s the prey to every miscreant, who can tamper suc- ıllly with the follies either of age or infancy.

e most plausible plea, which hath ever been offered in of hereditary succession, is, that it preserves a na- from civil wars; and were this true, it would be ıty: whereas, it is the most barefaced falsity ever ıed upon mankind, The whole history of England ·ns the fact. Thirty kings and two minors have ed in that distracted kingdom since the conquest; in ı time there have been (including the revolution) no han eight civil wars and nineteen rebellions. Where- instead of making for peace, it makes against it, and ›ys the very foundation it seems to stand upon.

e contest for monarchy and succession, between the :s of York and Lancaster, laid England in a scene of for many years. Twelve pitched battles, besides ishes and sieges, were fought between Henry and ırd; twice was Henry prisoner to Edward, who in rn was prisoner to Henry. And so uncertain is the ›f war and the temper of a nation, when nothing but ınal matters are the ground of a quarrel, that Henry aken in triumph from a prison to a palace, and Ed- obliged to fly from a palace to a foreign land; yet, as :n transitions of temper are seldom lasting, Henry in rn was driven from the throne, and Edward recalled cceed him. The parliament always following the ɀest side.

is contest began in the reign of Henry VI. and was ıtirely extinguished till Henry VII. in whom the fam- ɀere united: including a period of 67 years, *viz.* from to 1489.

In short, monarchy and succession have laid (not this or that kingdom only, but) the world in blood and ashes. 'Tis a form of government which the word of God bears testimony against, and blood will attend it.

If we inquire into the business of a king, we shall find (and in some countries they have none) that after sauntering away their lives without pleasure to themselves or advantage to the nation, they withdraw from the scene, and leave their successors to tread the same useless and idle round. In absolute monarchies the whole weight of business, civil and military, lies on the king; the children of Israel in their request for a king urged this plea, "that he may judge us, and go out before us and fight our battles." But in countries where he is neither a judge nor a general, as in England, a man would be puzzled to know what *is* his business.

The nearer any government approaches to a republic, the less business there is for a king. It is somewhat difficult to find a proper name for the government of England. Sir William Meredith calls it a republic; but in its present state it is unworthy of the name, because the corrupt influence of the crown, by having all the places in its disposal, hath so effectually swallowed up the power, and eaten out the virtue of the house of commons (the republican part in the constitution) that the government of England is nearly as monarchical as that of France or Spain. Men fall out with names without understanding them. For it is the republican and not the monarchical part of the constitution of England which Englishmen glory in, *viz.* the liberty of choosing an house of commons from out of their own body; and it is easy to see that when republican virtue fails, slavery ensues. Why is the constitution of England sickly, but because monarchy hath poisoned the republic; the crown hath engrossed the commons?

In England the king hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which, in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived.

THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS.

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put *on*, or rather that he will not put *off*, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs: but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, must decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

It has been reported of the late Mr. Pelham (who, though an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the house of commons, on the score, that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "*they will last my time.*" Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent—of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected, even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed time of continental union, faith, and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new era for politics is struck; a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, &c. prior to the nineteenth of April, *i.e.* to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacks of last year; which, though proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced

by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, *viz.* a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first has failed, and the second has withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right, that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and inquire into some of the many material injuries which these colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependant on Great Britain. To examine that connexion and dependance, on the principles of nature and common sense; to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependant.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America hath flourished under her former connexion with Great Britain, the same connexion is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power had any thing to do with her. The articles of commerce, by which she hath enriched herself, are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the continent at our expense as well as her own, is admitted, and she would have defended Turkey from the same motives, *viz.* for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering, that her motive was *interest* not *attachment;* and that she did not protect us from *our enemies* on *our account*, but from *her enemies* on *her own account*, from those who had no quarrel with us on any *other account*, and who will always be our enemies on the *same account*. Let Britain waive her

pretensions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependance, and we should be at peace with France and Spain, were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover last war ought to warn us against connexions.

It hath lately been asserted in parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, *i.e.* that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very round-about way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as *Americans*, but as our being the *subjects of Great Britain.*

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase *parent* or *mother country* hath been jesuitically adopted by the king and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from *every part* of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount local prejudices, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of *neighbor;* if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of *townsman;* if he travel out of the county, and meets him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and

town, and calls him *countryman, i.e. county-man;* but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France or any other part of *Europe*, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of *Englishmen.* And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are *countrymen;* for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller one; distinctions too limited for continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent. Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But, admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendants from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean any thing; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a *free port.* Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to show a single advantage that this continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connexion, are without number; and our duty to

mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instructs us to renounce the alliance; because, any submission to or dependance on Great Britain, tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels; and sets us at variance with nations, who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom, we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connexion with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while, by her dependance on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, *because of her connexion with Britain.* The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because, neutrality in that case, would be a safer convoy than a man of war. Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, *'tis time to part.* Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one over the other, was never the design of heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The Reformation was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent, is a form of government, which sooner or later must have an end: and a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction, that what he calls "the present constitution" is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that *this government* is not sufficiently lasting to ensure any thing which we may bequeath to posterity: and by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it, otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in

our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect, which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight.

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offence, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of reconciliation, may be included within the following descriptions.

Interested men, who are not to be trusted; weak men, who *cannot* see; prejudiced men, who *will not* see; and a certain set of moderate men, who think better of the European world than it deserves: and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this continent than all the other three.

It is the good fortune of many to live distant from the scene of sorrow; the evil is not sufficiently brought to *their* doors to make *them* feel the precariousness with which all American property is possessed. But let our imaginations transport us a few moments to Boston; that seat of wretchedness will teach us wisdom, and instruct us forever to renounce a power in whom we can have no trust. The inhabitants of that unfortunate city, who but a few months ago were in ease and affluence, have now no other alternative than to stay and starve, or turn out to beg. Endangered by the fire of their friends if they continue within the city, and plundered by the soldiery if they leave it. In their present situation they are prisoners without the hope of redemption, and in a general attack for their relief, they would be exposed to the fury of both armies.

Men of passive tempers look somewhat lightly over the offences of Britain, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, "*come, come, we shall be friends again, for all this.*" But examine the passions and feelings of mankind, bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me, whether you can hereafter love, honor, and faithfully serve the power that hath carried fire and sword into your land? If you cannot do all these, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon your posterity. Your future connexion with Britain, whom you can neither love nor honor, will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than the first. But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, hath your house been burnt? Hath your property been de-

stroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it. I mean not to exhibit horror for the purpose of provoking revenge, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of Britain or of Europe to conquer America, if she does not conquer herself by *delay* and *timidity*. The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected, the whole continent will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful.

It is repugnant to reason, and the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose, that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain do not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is *now* a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connexion, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilement grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in kings more than repeated petitioning—nothing hath contributed more than this very measure to make the kings of Europe absolute: witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us come to a final separation, and not leave

the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say, they will never attempt it again, is idle and visionary; we thought so at the repeal of the stamp-act, yet a year or two undeceived us: as well may we suppose that nations, which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which, when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness—there was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems: England to Europe—America to itself.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment, to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so; that every thing short of *that* is mere patchwork; that it can afford no lasting felicity,—that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when, going a little further, would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

As Britain hath not manifested the least inclination towards a compromise, we may be assured that no terms can be obtained worthy the acceptance of the continent, or anyways equal to the expense of blood and treasure we have been already put to.

The object contended for, ought always to bear some just proportion to the expense. The removal of North, or

the whole detestable junto, is a matter unworthy the millions we have expended. A temporary stoppage of trade, was an inconvenience, which would have sufficiently balanced the repeal of all the acts complained of, had such repeals been obtained; but if the whole continent must take up arms, if every man must be a soldier, it is scarcely worth our while to fight against a contemptible ministry only. Dearly, dearly do we pay for the repeal of the acts if that is all we fight for; for in a just estimation, it is as great a folly to pay a Bunker-hill price for law as for land. I have always considered the independency of this continent, as an event which, sooner or later must take place, and from the late rapid progress of the continent to maturity, the event cannot be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of hostilities, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest; otherwise, it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant, whose lease is just expiring. No man was a warmer wisher for a reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April, 1775,* but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen-tempered Pharaoh of England for ever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of *Father of his people*, can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of the continent. And that for several reasons.

1st, The powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent. And as he hath shown himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power; is he, or is he not, a proper person to say to these colonies, "*you shall make no laws but what I please!*" And is there any inhabitant of America so ignorant as not to know, that according to what is called the *present constitution*, this continent can make no laws but what the king gives leave to? and is there any man so unwise as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here, but such as suits *his* purpose? We may be as effectually enslaved by the

* Massacre at Lexington.

want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us in England. After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the crown will be exerted, to keep this continent as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarrelling, or ridiculously petitioning.—We are already greater than the king wishes us to be, and will he not hereafter endeavor to make us less? To bring the matter to one point, Is the power who is jealous of our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says *No*, to this question, is an *independent*, for independency means no more than this, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the king, the greatest enemy which this continent hath, or can have, shall tell us "*there shall be no laws but such as I like.*"

But the king, you will say, has a negative in England; the people there can make no laws without his consent. In point of right and good order, it is something very ridiculous, that a youth of twenty-one (which hath often happened) shall say to several millions of people, older and wiser than himself, I forbid this or that act of yours to be law. But in this place I decline this sort of reply, though I will never cease to expose the absurdity of it; and only answer, that England being the king's residence, and America not, makes quite another case. The king's negative *here* is ten times more dangerous and fatal than it can be in England; for *there* he will scarcely refuse his consent to a bill for putting England into as strong a state of defence as possible, and in America he would never suffer such a bill to be passed.

America is only a secondary object in the system of British politics—England consults the good of *this* country no further than it answers her *own* purpose. Wherefore, her own interest leads her to suppress the growth of *ours* in every case which doth not promote her advantage, or in the least interferes with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened! Men do not change from enemies to friends by the alteration of a name: and in order to show that reconciliation *now* is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, *that it would be policy in the king at this time, to repeal the acts, for the sake of reinstating himself in the government of the provinces;* in order that *he may accomplish by craft and*

subtlety, in the long run, what he cannot do by force in the short one. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

2dly, That as even the best terms, which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the colonies come of age, so the general face and state of things, in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising. Emigrants of property will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and which is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval, to dispose of their effects, and quit the continent.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but independence, *i.e.* a continental form of government, can keep the peace of the continent and preserve it inviolate from civil wars. I dread the event of a reconciliation with Britain now, as it is more than probable that it will be followed by a revolt somewhere or other, the consequences of which may be far more fatal than all the malice of Britain.

Thousands are already ruined by British barbarity. (Thousands more will probably suffer the same fate.) Those men have other feelings than us who have nothing suffered. All they *now* possess is liberty, what they before enjoyed is sacrificed to its service, and having nothing more to lose, they disdain submission. Besides, the general temper of the colonies, towards a British government, will be like that of a youth, who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about her. And a government which cannot preserve the peace, is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that Britain can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out the very day after reconciliation? I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded an independence, fearing that it would produce civil wars. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly correct, and that is the case here; for there is ten times more to dread from a patched-up connexion than from independence. I make the sufferer's case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property destroyed, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man,

sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrine of reconciliation, or consider myself bound thereby.

The colonies have manifested such a spirit of good order and obedience to continental government, as is sufficient to make every reasonable person easy and happy on that head. No man can assign the least pretence for his fears, on any other grounds, than such as are truly childish and ridiculous, *viz.* that one colony will be striving for superiority over another.

Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority; perfect equality affords no temptation. The republics of Europe are all (and we may say always) in peace. Holland and Switzerland are without wars, foreign or domestic: monarchical governments, it is true, are never long at rest: the crown itself is a temptation to enterprising ruffians at home; and that degree of pride and insolence ever attendant on regal authority, swells into a rupture with foreign powers, in instances where a republican government, by being formed on more natural principles, would negociate the mistake.

If there is any true cause of fear respecting independence, it is because no plan is yet laid down. Men do not see their way out, wherefore, as an opening into that business, I offer the following hints; at the same time modestly affirming, that I have no other opinion of them myself, than that they may be the means of giving rise to something better. Could the straggling thoughts of individuals be collected, they would frequently form materials for wise and able men to improve into useful matter.

Let the assemblies be annual, with a president only. The representation more equal. Their business wholly domestic, and subject to the authority of a continental congress.

Let each colony be divided into six, eight, or ten, convenient districts, each district to send a proper number of delegates to congress, so that each colony send at least thirty. The whole number in congress will be at least three hundred and ninety. Each congress to sit..... and to choose a president by the following method. When the delegates are met, let a colony be taken from the whole thirteen colonies by lot, after which, let the congress choose (by ballot) a president from out of the delegates of that province. In the next congress, let a colony be taken by lot from twelve only, omitting that colony

from which the president was taken in the former congress, and so proceeding on till the whole thirteen shall have had their proper rotation. And in order that nothing may pass into a law but what is satisfactorily just, not less than three-fifths of the congress to be called a majority. He that will promote discord, under a government so equally formed as this, would have joined Lucifer in his revolt.

But as there is a peculiar delicacy, from whom, or in what manner, this business must first arise, and as it seems most agreeable and consistent, that it should come from some intermediate body between the governed and the governors, that is, between the congress and the people, let a *Continental Conference* be held, in the following manner, and for the following purpose.

A committee of twenty-six members of congress, *viz.* two for each colony. Two members from each house of assembly, or provincial convention; and five representatives of the people at large, to be chosen in the capital city or town of each province, for, and in behalf of the whole province, by as many qualified voters as shall think proper to attend from all parts of the province for that purpose; or, if more convenient, the representatives may be chosen in two or three of the most populous parts thereof. In this conference, thus assembled, will be united, the two grand principles of business, *knowledge* and *power*. The members of congress, assemblies, or conventions, by having had experience in national concerns, will be able and useful counsellors, and the whole, being empowered by the people, will have a truly legal authority.

The conferring members being met, let their business be to frame a *Continental Charter*, or Charter of the United Colonies; (answering to what is called the Magna Charta of England) fixing the number and manner of choosing members of congress, and members of assembly, with their date of sitting, and drawing the line of business and jurisdiction between them: (always remembering, that our strength is continental, not provincial) securing freedom and property to all men, and above all things, the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; with such other matter as it is necessary for a charter to contain. Immediately after which, the said conference to dissolve, and the bodies which shall be chosen conformable to the said charter, to be the legislators and governors

of this continent for the time being: whose peace and happiness, may God preserve, Amen.

Should any body of men be hereafter delegated for this or some similar purpose, I offer them the following extracts from that wise observer on governments, Dragonetti. "The science" says he "of the politician consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense."

But where, say some, is the king of America? I'll tell you, friend, he reigns above, and doth not make havoc of mankind like the royal brute of Britain. Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honors, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know, that so far as we approve of monarchy, that in America *the law is king*. For as in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law ought to be king; and there ought to be no other. But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the crown at the conclusion of the ceremony be demolished, and scattered among the people whose right it is.

A government of our own is our natural right: and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Massanello* may hereafter arise, who, laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, finally sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things, will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she

* Thomas Anello, otherwise Massanello, a fisherman of Naples, who after spiriting up his countrymen in the public market place, against the oppression of the Spaniards, to whom the place was then subject, prompted them to revolt, and in the space of a day became king.

could hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government. There are thousands and tens of thousands, who would think it glorious to expel from the continent, that barbarous and hellish power, which hath stirred up the Indians and negroes to destroy us—the cruelty hath a double guilt, it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections, wounded through a thousand pores, instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them; and can there be any reason to hope, that as the relationship expires, the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better, when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings, for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts, and distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated from the earth, or have only a casual existence were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber, and the murderer, would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain, provoke us into justice.

O! ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been haunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

OF THE PRESENT ABILITY OF AMERICA: WITH SOME MISCELLANEOUS REFLECTIONS.

I HAVE never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed his opinion, that a separation between the countries would take place one time or other: and there is no instance, in which we have shown less judgment, than in endeavoring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the continent for independence.

As all men allow the measure, and vary only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor, if possible, to find out the *very* time. But we need not go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for, the *time hath found us.* The general concurrence, the glorious union of all things proves the fact.

It is not in numbers, but in unity, that our great strength lies; yet our present numbers are sufficient to repel the force of all the world. The continent hath, at this time, the largest body of armed and disciplined men of any power under heaven; and is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which, no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter, and either more, or less than this, might be fatal in its effects. Our land force is already sufficient, and as to naval affairs, we cannot be insensible, that Britain would never suffer an American man of war to be built, while the continent remained in her hands. Wherefore, we should be no forwarder an hundred years hence in that branch, than we are now; but the truth is, we should be less so, because the timber of the country is every day diminishing, and that which will remain at last, will be far off or difficult to procure.

Were the continent crowded with inhabitants, her sufferings under the present circumstances would be intolerable. The more seaport-towns we had, the more should we have both to defend and to lose. Our present numbers are so happily proportioned to our wants, that no man need be idle. The diminution of trade affords an army, and the necessities of an army create a new trade.

Debts we have none; and whatever we may contract on this account will serve as a glorious memento of our virtue. Can we but leave posterity with a settled form of government, an independent constitution of its own, the purchase at any price will be cheap. But to expend millions for the sake of getting a few vile acts repealed, and routing the present ministry only, is unworthy the charge, and is using posterity with the utmost cruelty; because it is leaving them the great work to do, and a debt upon their backs, from which they derive no advantage. Such a thought is unworthy a man of honor, and is the true characteristic of a narrow heart and a pedling politician.

The debt we may contract doth not deserve our regard, if the work be but accomplished. No nation ought to be without a debt. A national debt is a national bond; and when it bears no interest, is in no case a grievance. Britain is oppressed with a debt of upwards of one hundred and forty millions sterling, for which she pays upwards of four millions interest. And as a compensation for her debt, she has a large navy; America is without a debt, and without a navy; yet for the twentieth part of the English national debt, could have a navy as large again. The navy of England is not worth, at this time, more than three millions and a half sterling.

The following calculations are given as a proof that the above estimation of the navy is a just one. [*See Entick's Naval History, Intro.* p. 56.]

The charge of building a ship of each rate, and furnishing her with masts, yards, sails, and rigging, together with a proportion of eight months boatswain's and carpenter's sea-stores, as calculated by Mr. Burchett, secretary to the navy.

For a ship of 100 guns	35,553*l.*
90	29,886
80	23,638
70	17,785
60	14,197
50	10,606
40	7,558
30	5,846
20	3,710

And hence it is easy to sum up the value, or cost, rather, of the whole British navy, which, in the year 1757, when it was at its greatest glory, consisted of the following ships and guns.

Ships.	*Guns.*	*Cost of one.*	*Cost of all.*
6 -	100 -	55,553*l.* -	213,318*l.*
12 -	90 -	29,886 -	358,632
12 -	80 -	23,638 -	283,656
43 -	70 -	17,785 -	764,755
35 -	60 -	14,197 -	496,895
40 -	50 -	10,605 -	424,240
45 -	40 -	7,558 -	340,110
58 -	20 -	3,710 -	215,180
85 Sloops, bombs, and fireships, one with another, at		2,000	170,000
		Cost,	3,266,786*l.*
		Remains for guns,	233,214
		Total,	3,500,000*l.*

No country on the globe is so happily situated, or so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron, and cordage are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing. Whereas the Dutch, who make large profits by hiring out their ships of war to the Spaniards and Portuguese, are obliged to import most of the materials they use. We ought to view the building a fleet as an article of commerce, it being the natural manufacture of this country. It is the best money we can lay out. A navy when finished is worth more than it cost: and is that nice point in national policy, in which commerce and protection are united. Let us build; if we want them not, we can sell; and by that means replace our paper currency with ready gold and silver.

In point of manning a fleet, people in general run into great errors; it is not necessary that one fourth part should be sailors. The privateer Terrible, captain Death, stood the hottest engagement of any ship last war, yet had not twenty sailors on board, though her complement of men was upwards of two hundred. A few able and social sailors will soon instruct a sufficient number of active landsmen in the common work of a ship. Wherefore, we never can be more capable of beginning on maritime matters than now, while our timber is standing, our fisheries blocked up, and our sailors and shipwrights out of employ. Men of war, of seventy and eighty guns, were built forty years ago in New-England, and why not the same now? Ship building is America's greatest pride, and in which, she will in time, excel the whole world. The great empires of the east are mostly inland, and consequently excluded from the possibility of rivalling her. Africa is in a state of barbarism; and no power in Europe, hath either

such an extent of coast, or such an internal supply of materials. Where nature hath given the one, she hath withheld the other; to America only hath she been liberal of both. The vast empire of Russia is almost shut out from the sea; wherefore, her boundless forests, her tar, iron, and cordage are only articles of commerce.

In point of safety, ought we to be without a fleet? We are not the little people now, which we were sixty years ago; at that time we might have trusted our property in the streets, or fields rather; and slept securely without locks or bolts to our doors or windows. The case is now altered, and our methods of defence, ought to improve, with our increase of property. A common pirate, twelve months ago, might have come up the Delaware, and laid this city under contribution, for what sum he pleased; and the same might have happened to other places. Nay, any daring fellow, in a brig of fourteen or sixteen guns, might have robbed the whole continent, and carried off half a million of money. These are circumstances which demand our attention, and point out the necessity of naval protection.

Some, perhaps, will say, that after we have made it up with Britain, she will protect us. Can they be so unwise as to mean, that she will keep a navy in our harbors for that purpose? Common sense will tell us, that the power which hath endeavored to subdue us, is of all others, the most improper to defend us. Conquest may be effected under the pretence of friendship; and ourselves, after a long and brave resistance, be at last cheated into slavery. And if her ships are not to be admitted into our harbors, I would ask, how is she to protect us? A navy three or four thousand miles off can be of little use, and on sudden emergencies, none at all. Wherefore, if we must hereafter protect ourselves, why not do it for ourselves? Why do it for another?

The English list of ships of war, is long and formidable, but not a tenth part of them are at any one time fit for service, numbers of them not in being; yet their names are pompously continued in the list, if only a plank be left of the ship; and not a fifth part of such as are fit for service, can be spared on any one station at one time. The East and West Indies, Mediterranean, Africa, and other parts of the world, over which Britain extends her claim, make large demands upon her navy. From a mixture of preju-

dice and inattention, we have contracted a false notion respecting the navy of England, and have talked as if we should have the whole of it to encounter at once, and for that reason, supposed, that we must have one as large; which not being instantly practicable, has been made use of by a set of disguised tories to discourage our beginning thereon. Nothing can be further from truth than this; for if America had only a twentieth part of the naval force of Britain, she would be by far an over match for her; because, as we neither have, nor claim, any foreign dominion, our whole force would be employed on our own coast, where we should, in the long run, have two to one the advantage of those who had three or four thousand miles to sail over, before they could attack us, and the same distance to return in order to refit and recruit. And although Britain, by her fleet, hath a check over our trade to Europe, we have as large a one over her trade to the West Indies, which, by laying in the neighborhood of the continent, is entirely at its mercy.

Some method might be fallen on to keep up a naval force in time of peace, if we should not judge it necessary to support a constant navy. If premiums were to be given to merchants, to build and employ in their service, ships mounted with twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty guns (the premiums to be in proportion to the loss of bulk to the merchants), fifty or sixty of those ships, with a few guardships on constant duty, would keep up a sufficient navy, and that without burdening ourselves with the evil so loudly complained of in England, of suffering their fleet, in time of peace, to lie rotting in the docks. To unite the sinews of commerce and defence is sound policy; for when our strength and our riches play into each other's hand, we need fear no external enemy.

In almost every article of defence we abound. Hemp flourishes even to rankness, so that we need not want cordage. Our iron is superior to that of other countries. Our small arms equal to any in the world. Cannon we can cast at pleasure. Saltpetre and gunpowder we are every day producing. Our knowledge is hourly improving. Resolution is our inherent character, and courage hath never yet forsaken us. Wherefore, what is it that we want? Why is it that we hesitate? From Britain we can expect nothing but ruin. If she is once admitted to the government of America again, this continent will not be

worth living in. Jealousies will be always arising, insurrections will be constantly happening; and who will go forth to quell them? Who will venture his life to reduce his own countrymen to a foreign obedience? The difference between Pennsylvania and Connecticut, respecting some unlocated lands, shows the insignificance of a British government, and fully proves, that nothing but continental authority can regulate continental matters.

Another reason why the present time is preferable to all others, is, that the fewer our numbers are, the more land there is yet unoccupied, which instead of being lavished by the king on his worthless dependants, may be hereafter applied, not only to the discharge of the present debt, but to the constant support of government. No nation under heaven hath such an advantage as this.

The infant state of the colonies, as it is called, so far from being against, is an argument in favor of independence. We are sufficiently numerous, and were we more so, we might be less united. It is a matter worthy of observation, that the more a country is peopled, the smaller their armies are. In military numbers, the ancients far exceeded the moderns: and the reason is evident, for trade being the consequence of population, men became too much absorbed thereby to attend to any thing else. Commerce diminishes the spirit, both of patriotism and military defence. And history sufficiently informs us, that the bravest achievements were always accomplished in the non-age of a nation. With the increase of commerce, England hath lost its spirit. The city of London, notwithstanding its numbers, submits to continued insults with the patience of a coward. The more men have to lose, the less willing are they to venture. The rich are in general slaves to fear, and submit to courtly power with the trembling duplicity of a spaniel.

Youth is the seed-time of good habits, as well in nations as in individuals. It might be difficult if not impossible, to form the continent into one government half a century hence. The vast variety of interests, occasioned by an increase of trade and population, would create confusion. Colony would be against colony. Each being able, might scorn each other's assistance: and while the proud and foolish gloried in their little distinctions, the wise would lament, that the union had not been formed before. Wherefore, the *present time* is the *true time* for establishing it. The

intimacy which is contracted in infancy, and the friendship which is formed in misfortune, are, of all others, the most lasting and unalterable. Our present union is marked with both these characters: we are young, and we have been distressed; but our concord hath withstood our troubles, and fixes a memorable era for posterity to glory in.

The present time, likewise, is that peculiar time, which never happens to a nation but once, *viz.* the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas the articles or charter of government, should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the errors of other nations, let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity—*to begin government at the right end.*

When William the Conqueror subdued England, he gave them law at the point of the sword; and until we consent that the seat of government, in America, be legally and authoritatively occupied, we shall be in danger of having it filled by some fortunate ruffian, who may treat us in the same manner, and then, where will be our freedom? where our property?

As to religion, I hold it to be the indispensable duty of all governments, to protect all conscientious professors thereof, and I know of no other business which government hath to do therewith. Let a man throw aside that narrowness of soul, that selfishness of principle, which the niggards of all professions are so unwilling to part with, and he will be at once delivered of his fears on that head. Suspicion is the companion of mean souls, and the bane of all good society. For myself, I fully and conscientiously believe, that it is the will of the Almighty, that there should be a diversity of religious opinions among us: it affords a larger field for our Christian kindness. Were we all of one way of thinking, our religious dispositions would want matter for probation; and on this liberal principle, I look on the various denominations among us, to be like children of the same family, differing only in what is called their Christian names.

In a former page, I threw out a few thoughts on the propriety of a Continental Charter (for I only presume to offer

hints, not plans) and in this place, I take the liberty of re-mentioning the subject, by observing, that a charter is to be understood as a bond of solemn obligation, which the whole enters into, to support the right of every separate part, whether of religion, personal freedom, or property. A firm bargain and a right reckoning make long friends.

I have heretofore likewise mentioned the necessity of a large and equal representation; and there is no political matter which more deserves our attention. A small number of electors or a small number of representatives, are equally dangerous. But if the number of the representatives be not only small, but unequal, the danger is increased. As an instance of this, I mention the following; when the associators' petition was before the house of assembly of Pennsylvania, twenty-eight members only were present; all the Bucks county members, being eight, voted against it, and had seven of the Chester members done the same, this whole province had been governed by two counties only; and this danger it is always exposed to. The unwarrantable stretch likewise, which that house made in their last sitting, to gain an undue authority over the delegates of this province, ought to warn the people at large, how they trust power out of their own hands. A set of instructions for their delegates were put together, which in point of sense and business would have dishonored a school-boy, and after being approved by a *few*, a *very few*, without doors, were carried into the house, and there passed *in behalf of the whole colony*; whereas, did the whole colony know, with what ill will that house had entered on some necessary public measures, they would not hesitate a moment to think them unworthy of such a trust.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons from the several houses of assembly for that purpose; and the wisdom with which they have proceeded hath preserved this continent from ruin. But as it is more than probable that we shall never be without a *Congress*, every well-wisher to good order must own, that the mode for choosing members of that body, deserves consideration. And I put it as a question to those, who make a study of mankind, whether *representation and election* is not too great a power

for one and the same body of men to possess? Whenever we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary.

It is from our enemies that we often gain excellent maxims, and are frequently surprised into reason by their mistakes. Mr. Cornwall (one of the lords of the treasury) treated the petition of the New-York assembly with contempt, because *that* house, he said, consisted but of twenty-six members, which trifling number, he argued, could not with decency be put for the whole. We thank him for his involuntary honesty.*

To conclude. However strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given, to show, that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined declaration for independence. Some of which are,

1st, It is the custom of nations, when any two are at war, for some other powers, not engaged in the quarrel, to step in as mediators, and bring about the preliminaries of a peace; but while America calls herself the subject of Britain, no power, however well disposed she may be, can offer her mediation. Wherefore, in our present state, we may quarrel on for ever.

2d, It is unreasonable to suppose, that France or Spain will give us any kind of assistance, if we mean only, to make use of that assistance for the purpose of repairing the breach, and strengthening the connexion between Britain and America; because, those powers would be sufferers by the consequences.

3d, While we profess ourselves the subjects of Britain, we must, in the eyes of foreign nations, be considered as rebels. The precedent is somewhat dangerous to *their peace*, for men to be in arms under the name of subjects; we, on the spot, can solve the paradox: but to unite resistance and subjection, requires an idea much too refined for common understanding.

4th, Should a manifesto be published, and despatched to foreign courts, setting forth the miseries we have endured, and the peaceful methods which we have ineffectually used for redress; declaring, at the same time, that not being

* Those who would fully understand of what great consequence a large and equal representation is to a state, should read Burgh's Political Disquisitions.

able, any longer, to live happily or safely under the cruel disposition of the British court, we had been driven to the necessity of breaking off all connexion with her; at the same time, assuring all such courts of our peaceable disposition towards them, and of our desire of entering into trade with them. Such a memorial would produce more good effects to this continent, than if a ship were freighted with petitions to Britain.

Under our present denomination of British subjects, we can neither be received nor heard abroad: the custom of all courts is against us, and will be so, until, by an independence, we take rank with other nations.

These proceedings may at first appear strange and difficult; but like all other steps, which we have already passed over, will in a little time become familiar and agreeable; and, until an independence is declared, the continent will feel itself like a man who continues putting off some unpleasant business from day to day, yet knows it must be done, hates to set about it, wishes it over, and is continually haunted with the thoughts of its necessity.

APPENDIX.

Since the publication of the first edition of this pamphlet, or rather, on the same day on which it came out, the king's speech made its appearance in this city. Had the spirit of prophesy directed the birth of this production, it could not have brought it forth at a more seasonable juncture, or at a more necessary time. The bloody-mindedness of the one, shows the necessity of pursuing the doctrine of the other. Men read by way of revenge:—and the speech, instead of terrifying, prepared a way for the manly principles of independence.

Ceremony, and even silence, from whatever motives they may arise, have a hurtful tendency, when they give the least degree of countenance to base and wicked performances; wherefore, if this maxim be admitted, it naturally follows, that the king's speech, as being a piece of finished villainy, deserved, and still deserves, a general execration, both by the congress and the people. Yet, as the domestic

tranquillity of a nation, depends greatly on the *chastity* of what may properly be called *national manners*, it is often better to pass some things over in silent disdain, than to make use of such new methods of dislike, as might introduce the least innovation on that guardian of our peace and safety. And, perhaps, it is chiefly owing to this prudent delicacy, that the king's speech hath not before now suffered a public execution. The speech, if it may be called one, is nothing better than a wilful, audacious libel against the truth, the common good and the existence of mankind; and is a formal and pompous method of offering up human sacrifices to the pride of tyrants. But this general massacre of mankind, is one of the privileges and the certain consequences of kings; for as nature knows them *not*, they know *not her*, and although they are beings of our *own* creating, they know not *us*, and are become the gods of their creators. The speech hath one good quality, which is, that it is not calculated to deceive, neither can we, if we would, be deceived by it. Brutality and tyranny appear on the face of it. It leaves us at no loss; and every line convinces, even in the moment of reading, that he, who hunts the woods for prey, the naked and untutored Indian, is less savage than the king of Britain.

Sir John Dalrymple, the putative father of a whining jesuitical piece, fallaciously called, "*The address of the people of* England *to the inhabitants of* America," hath, perhaps, from a vain supposition that the people *here* were to be frightened at the pomp and description of a king, given (though very unwisely on his part) the real character of the present one: "But," says this writer, "if you are inclined to pay compliments to an administration, which we do not complain of" (meaning the Marquis of Rockingham's at the repeal of the Stamp Act) "it is very unfair in you to withhold them from that prince, *by whose* NOD ALONE *they were permitted to do any thing.*" This is toryism with a witness! Here is idolatry even without a mask: and he who can calmly hear and digest such doctrine, hath forfeited his claim to rationality; is an apostate from the order of manhood, and ought to be considered—as one, who hath not only given up the proper dignity of man, but sunk himself beneath the rank of animals, and contemptibly crawls through the world like a worm.

However, it matters very little now, what the king of England either says or does; he hath wickedly broken

through every moral and human obligation, trampled nature and conscience beneath his feet; and by a steady and constitutional spirit of insolence and cruelty, procured for himself an universal hatred. It is *now* the interest of America to provide for herself. She hath already a large and young family, whom it is more her duty to take care of, than to be granting away her property to support a power which is become a reproach to the names of men and Christians—*Ye*, whose office it is to watch over the morals of a nation, of whatsoever sect or denomination ye are of, as well as ye, who are more immediately the guardians of the public liberty, if you wish to preserve your native country uncontaminated by European corruption, ye must in secret wish a separation—but leaving the moral part to private reflection, I shall chiefly confine my further remarks to the following heads:

1st, That it is the interest of America to be separated from Britain.

2d, Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, *reconciliation* or *independence?* with some occasional remarks.

In support of the first, I could, if I judged it proper, produce the opinion of some of the ablest and most experienced men on this continent; and whose sentiments, on that head, are not yet publicly known. It is in reality a self-evident position: for no nation, in a state of foreign dependance, limited in its commerce, and cramped and fettered in its legislative powers, can ever arrive at any material eminence. America doth not yet know what opulence is; and although the progress which she hath made stands unparalleled in the history of other nations, it is but childhood, compared with what she would be capable of arriving at, had she, as she ought to have, the legislative powers in her own hands. England is, at this time, proudly coveting what would do her no good were she to accomplish it; and the continent hesitating on a matter which will be her final ruin if neglected. It is the commerce and not the conquest of America by which England is to be benefited, and that would in a great measure continue, were the countries as independent of each other as France and Spain; because in many articles neither can go to a better market. But it is the independence of this country of Britain, or any other, which is now the main and only object worthy of contention, and which, like all other truths discovered by necessity, will appear clearer and stronger every day.

1st, Because it will come to that one time or other.

2d, Because the longer it is delayed, the harder it will be to accomplish.

I have frequently amused myself both in public and private companies, with silently remarking the specious errors of those who speak without reflecting. And among the many which I have heard, the following seems the most general, *viz.* that if this rupture should happen forty or fifty years hence, instead of *now*, the continent would be more able to shake off the dependance. To which I reply, that our military ability, *at this time*, arises from the experience gained in the last war, and which in forty or fifty years time, would be totally extinct. The continent would not, by that time, have a general, or even a military officer left; and we, or those who may succeed us, would be as ignorant of martial matters as the ancient Indians: and this single position, closely attended to, will unanswerably prove that the present time is preferable to all others. The argument turns thus—at the conclusion of the last war, we had experience, but wanted numbers; and forty or fifty years hence, we shall have numbers, without experience; wherefore, the proper point of time, must be some particular point between the two extremes, in which a sufficiency of the former remains, and a proper increase of the latter is obtained: and that point of time is the present time.

The reader will pardon this digression, as it does not properly come under the head I first set out with, and to which I again return by the following position, *viz.*

Should affairs be patched up with Britain, and she remain the governing and sovereign power of America, (which, as matters are now circumstanced, is giving up the point entirely) we shall deprive ourselves of the very means of sinking the debt we have, or may contract. The value of the back lands which some of the provinces are clandestinely deprived of, by the unjust extension of the limits of Canada, valued only at five pounds sterling per hundred acres, amount to upwards of twenty-five millions, Pennsylvania currency; and the quit-rents at one penny sterling per acre, to two millions yearly.

It is by the sale of those lands that the debt may be sunk, without burden to any, and the quit-rent reserved thereon, will always lessen, and in time, will wholly support the yearly expense of government. It matters not how long

the debt is in paying, so that the lands when sold be applied to the discharge of it, and for the execution of which, the congress for the time being, will be the continental trustees.

I proceed now to the second head, *viz.* Which is the easiest and most practicable plan, *reconciliation* or *independence?* with some occasional remarks.

He who takes nature for his guide is not easily beaten out of his argument, and on that ground, I answer generally—*That* INDEPENDENCE *being a* SINGLE SIMPLE LINE, *contained within ourselves; and reconciliation, a matter exceedingly perplexed and complicated, and in which a treacherous, capricious court is to interfere, gives the answer without a doubt.*

The present state of America is truly alarming to every man who is capable of reflection. Without law, without government, without any other mode of power than what is founded on, and granted by, courtesy. Held together by an unexampled concurrence of sentiment, which is nevertheless subject to change, and which every secret enemy is endeavoring to dissolve. Our present condition is, legislation without law; wisdom without a plan; a constitution without a name; and, what is strangely astonishing, perfect independence contending for dependance. The instance is without a precedent; the case never existed before; and who can tell what may be the event? The property of no man is secure in the present unbraced system of things. The mind of the multitude is left at random, and seeing no fixed object before them, they pursue such as fancy or opinion presents. Nothing is criminal; there is no such thing as treason; wherefore, every one thinks himself at liberty to act as he pleases. The tories dared not have assembled offensively, had they known that their lives, by that act, were forfeited to the laws of the state. A line of distinction should be drawn between English soldiers taken in battle, and inhabitants of America taken in arms. The first are prisoners, but the latter traitors. The one forfeits his liberty, the other his head.

Notwithstanding our wisdom, there is a visible feebleness in some of our proceedings which gives encouragement to dissentions. The Continental Belt is too loosely buckled. And if something is not done in time, it will be too late to do any thing, and we shall fall into a state, in which neither *Reconciliation* nor *Independence* will be practicable. The king and his worthless adherents are got at

their old game of dividing the continent, and there are not wanting among us, printers, who will be busy in spreading specious falsehoods. The artful and hypocritical letter which appeared a few months ago in two of the New-York papers, and likewise in others, is an evidence that there are men who want both judgment and honesty.

It is easy getting into holes and corners and talking of reconciliation: but do such men seriously consider how difficult the task is, and how dangerous it may prove should the continent divide thereon. Do they take within their view, all the various orders of men whose situation and circumstances, as well as their own, are to be considered therein. Do they put themselves in the place of the sufferer whose *all* is *already* gone, and of the soldier, who hath quitted *all* for the defence of his country? If their ill-judged moderation be suited to their own private situations *only*, regardless of others, the event will convince them that "they are reckoning without their host."

Put us, say some, on the footing we were in the year 1763: to which I answer, the request is not *now* in the power of Britan to comply with, neither will she propose it; but if it were, and even should it be granted, I ask, as a reasonable question, by what means is such a corrupt and faithless court to be kept to its engagements? Another parliament, nay, even the present, may hereafter repeal the obligation, on the pretence of its being violently obtained, or unwisely granted; and in that case, where is our redress? No going to law with nations; cannon are the barristers of crowns; and the sword, not of justice, but of war, decides the suit. To be on the footing of 1763, it is not sufficient, that the laws only be put in the same state, but, that our circumstances, likewise, be put in the same state; our burnt and destroyed towns repaired or built up, our private losses made good, our public debts (contracted for defence) discharged; otherwise, we shall be millions worse than we were at that enviable period. Such a request, had it been complied with a year ago, would have won the heart and soul of the continent—but now it is too late: "The Rubicon is passed."

Besides, the taking up arms, merely to enfore the repeal of a pecuniary law, seems as unwarrantable by the divine law, and as repugnant to human feelings, as the taking up arms to enforce obedience thereto. The object, on either side, doth not justify the means; for the lives of men

are too valuable to be cast away on such trifles. It is the violence which is done and threatened to our persons; the destruction of our property by an armed force; the invasion of our country by fire and sword, which conscientiously qualifies the use of arms: and the instant in which such mode of defence became necessary, all subjection to Britain ought to have ceased; and the independence of America should have been considered as dating its era from, and published by, *the first musket that was fired against her.* This line is a line of consistency; neither drawn by caprice, nor extended by ambition; but produced by a chain of events, of which the colonies were not the authors.

I shall conclude these remarks, with the following timely and well-intended hints. We ought to reflect, that there are three different ways by which an independency may hereafter be effected; and that *one* of those *three*, will, one day or other, be the fate of America, *viz.* By the legal voice of the people in congress; by a military power; or by a mob: it may not always happen that our soldiers are citizens, and the multitude a body of reasonable men; virtue, as I have already remarked, is not hereditary, neither is it perpetual. Should an independency be brought about by the first of those means, we have every opportunity and every encouragement before us, to form the noblest, purest constitution on the face of the earth. We have it in our power to begin the world over again. A situation, similar to the present, hath not happened since the days of Noah until now. The birth-day of a new world is at hand, and a race of men, perhaps as numerous as all Europe contains, are to receive their portion of freedom from the events of a few months. The reflection is awful—and in this point of view, how trifling, how ridiculous, do the little paltry cavilings, of a few weak or interested men appear, when weighed against the business of a world.

Should we neglect the present favorable and inviting period, and independence be hereafter effected by any other means, we must charge the consequence to ourselves, or to those rather, whose narrow and prejudiced souls, are habitually opposing the measure, without either inquiring or reflecting. There are reasons to be given in support of independence, which men should rather privately think of, than be publicly told of. We ought not now to be debating whether we shall be independent or not, but anxious to accomplish it on a firm, secure, and honorable basis, and

uneasy rather, that it is not yet began upon. Every day convinces us of its necessity. Even the tories (if such beings yet remain among us) should, of all men, be the most solicitous to promote it; for, as the appointment of committees at first, protected them from popular rage, so, a wise and well established form of government, will be the only certain means of continuing it securely to them. Wherefore, if they have not virtue enough to be *Whigs*, they ought to have prudence enough to wish for independence.

In short, independence is the only *bond* that can tie and keep us together. We shall then see our object, and our ears will be legally shut against the schemes of an intriguing, as well as cruel, enemy. We shall then, too, be on a proper footing to treat with Britain; for there is reason to conclude, that the pride of that court, will be less hurt by treating with the American states for terms of peace, than with those, whom she denominates "rebellious subjects," for terms of accommodation. It is our delaying it that encourages her to hope for conquest, and our backwardness tends only to prolong the war. As we have, without any good effect therefrom, withheld our trade to obtain a redress of our grievances, let us *now* try the alternative, by independently redressing them ourselves, and then offering to open the trade. The mercantile and reasonable part of England, will be still with us; because, peace, *with* trade, is preferable to war, *without* it. And if this offer be not accepted, other courts may be applied to.

On these grounds I rest the matter. And as no offer hath yet been made to refute the doctrine contained in the former editions of this pamphlet, it is a negative proof, that either the doctrine cannot be refuted, or, that the party in favor of it are too numerous to be opposed. *Wherefore*, instead of gazing at each other, with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us, hold out to his neighbor the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissention. Let the names of whig and tory be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of *a good citizen; an open and resolute friend; and a virtuous supporter of the* RIGHTS *of* MANKIND, *and of the* FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES OF AMERICA.

END OF COMMON SENSE.

EPISTLE TO QUAKERS.

EPISTLE TO QUAKERS.

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the Representatives of the Religious Society of the people alled Quakers, or to so many of them as were concerned in ublishing a late piece, entitled "THE ANCIENT TESTIMONY *nd* PRINCIPLES *of the people called* QUAKERS, *renewed, with espect to the* KING *and* GOVERNMENT, *and touching the* COM-OTIONS *now prevailing in these and other parts of* AMERICA, *ddressed to the* PEOPLE IN GENERAL."

'HE writer of this is one of those few, who never dis-ors religion, either by ridiculing or cavilling at any omination whatsoever. To God, and not to man, are nen accountable on the score of religion. Wherefore, epistle is not so properly addressed to you as a relig-, but as a political body, dabbling in matters, which professed quietude of your principles instruct you not ieddle with.

ıs you have, without a proper authority for so doing, yourselves in the place of the whole body of the Qua-, so the writer of this, in order to be in an equal rank ı yourselves, is under the necessity of putting himself ıe place of all those who approve the very writings principles against which your Testimony is directed: he hath chosen their singular situation, in order that might discover in him, that presumption of character :h you cannot see in yourselves. For neither he nor have any claim or title to *Political Representation.*

'hen men have departed from the right way, it is no der that they stumble and fall. And it is evident from

the manner in which ye have managed your Testimony, that politics (as a religious body of men) is not your proper walk; for however well adapted it might appear to you, it is, nevertheless, a jumble of good and bad unwisely put together, and the conclusion drawn therefrom, both unnatural and unjust.

The two first pages (and the whole doth not make but four) we give you credit for, and expect the same civility from you, because the love and desire of peace is not confined to Quakerism, it is the *natural*, as well as the religious wish of all denominations of men. And on this ground, as men laboring to establish an Independent Constitution of our own, do we exceed all others in our hope, end and aim. *Our plan is peace for ever.* We are tired of contention with Britain, and can see no real end to it but in a final separation. We act consistently, because, for the sake of introducing an endless and uninterrupted peace, do we bear the evils and the burdens of the present day. We are endeavoring, and will steadily continue to endeavor, to separate and dissolve a connexion which has already filled our land with blood; and which, while the name of it remains, will be the fatal cause of future mischiefs to both countries.

We fight neither for revenge nor conquest; neither from pride nor passion; we are not insulting the world with our fleets and armies, nor ravaging the globe for plunder. Beneath the shade of our own vines are we attacked; in our own houses, and on our own lands, is the violence committed against us. We view our enemies in the characters of highwaymen and housebreakers, and having no defence for ourselves in the civil law, are obliged to punish them by the military one, and apply the sword, in the very case where you have before now applied the halter. Perhaps we feel for the ruined and insulted sufferers in all and every part of the continent, with a degree of tenderness which hath not yet made its way into some of your bosoms. But be ye sure that ye mistake not the cause and ground of your Testimony. Call not coldness of soul, religion, nor put the *bigot* in the place of the *Christian*.

O! ye partial ministers of your own acknowledged principles! If the bearing arms be sinful, the first going to war must be more so, by all the difference between wilful attack and unavoidable defence.

Wherefore, if ye really preach from conscience, and mean not to make a political hobby-horse of your religion, convince the world thereof, by proclaiming your doctrine to our enemies, *for they likewise bear* ARMS. Give us proof of your sincerity, by publishing it at St. James's, to the commanders-in-chief at Boston, to the admirals and captains who are piratically ravaging our coasts, and to all the murdering miscreants who are acting in authority under HIM whom ye profess to serve. Had ye the honest soul of Barclay* ye would preach repentance to *your* king: ye would tell the royal tyrant of his sins, and warn him of eternal ruin. Ye would not spend your partial invectives against the injured and insulted only, but like faithful ministers, would cry aloud and *spare none.* Say not that ye are persecuted, neither endeavor to make us the authors of that reproach, which ye are bringing upon yourselves; for we testify unto all men, that we do not complain against you because ye are *Quakers*, but because ye pretend *to be* and are NOT Quakers.

Alas! it seems by the particular tendency of some part of your Testimony, and other parts of your conduct, as if all sin was reduced to, and comprehended in, *the act of bearing arms*, and that by the *people only.* Ye appear to us, to have mistaken party for conscience; because the general tenor of your actions wants uniformity; and it is exceedingly difficult for us to give credit to many of your pretended scruples; because we see them made by the same men, who, in the very instant that they are exclaiming against the mammon of this world, are nevertheless, hunting after it with a step as steady as time, and an appetite as keen as death.

The quotation which ye have made from Proverbs, in the third page of your Testimony, that "when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be

* "Thou hast tasted of prosperity and adversity; thou knowest what it is to be banished thy native country, to be over-ruled as well as to rule, and set upon the throne: and being *oppressed* thou hast reason to know how *hateful* the *oppressor* is both to God and man; if after all these warnings and advertisements, thou dost not turn unto the Lord with all thy heart, but forget him who remembered thee in thy distress, and give up thyself to follow lust and vanity, surely, great will be thy condemnation.—Against which snare, as well as the temptation of those who may or do feed thee, and prompt thee to evil, the most excellent and prevalent remedy will be, to apply thyself to that light of Christ which shineth in thy conscience, and which neither can, nor will flatter thee, nor suffer thee to be at ease in thy sins."

Barclay's Address to Charles II.

at peace with him;" is very unwisely chosen on your part; because it amounts to a proof that the king's ways (whom ye are so desirous of supporting) do *not* please the Lord, otherwise his reign would be in peace.

I now proceed to the latter part of your Testimony, and that, for which all the foregoing seems only an introduction, *viz.*

"It hath ever been our judgment and principle, since we were called to profess the light of Christ Jesus, manifested in our consciences unto this day, that the setting up and putting down kings and governments, is God's peculiar prerogative; for causes best known to himself: and that it is not our business to have any hand or contrivance therein; nor to be busy-bodies above our station, much less to plot and contrive the ruin, or overturn of any of them, but to pray for the king, and safety of our nation, and good of all men: that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty; *under the government which God is pleased to set over us.*" If these are really your principles why do ye not abide by them? Why do ye not leave that, which ye call God's work to be managed by himself? These very principles instruct you to wait with patience and humility, for the event of all public measures, and to receive *that event* as the divine will towards you. Wherefore, what occasion is there for your *political Testimony*, if you fully believe what it contains? And the very publishing it proves, that either ye do not believe what ye profess, or have not virtue enough to practice what ye believe.

The principles of Quakerism have a direct tendency to make a man the quiet and inoffensive subject of any, and every government *which is set over him.* And if the setting up and putting down of kings and governments is God's peculiar prerogative, he most certainly will not be robbed thereof by us; wherefore, the principle itself leads you to approve of every thing, which ever happened, or may happen to kings, as being his work. Oliver Cromwell thanks you.—Charles, then, died not by the hands of man; and should the present proud imitator of him come to the same untimely end, the writers and publishers of the Testimony, are bound by the doctrine it contains, to applaud the fact. Kings are not taken away by miracles, neither are changes in governments brought about by any other means than such as are common and human; and such as we now are using. Even the dispersing of the Jews, though foretold

y our Saviour, was effected by arms. Wherefore, as ye efuse to be the means on one side, ye ought not to be medlers on the other; but to wait the issue in silence; and unss you can produce divine authority, to prove, that the lmighty who hath created and placed this *new* world at ae greatest distance it could possibly stand, east and west, rom every part of the old, doth, nevertheless, disapprove f its being independent of the corrupt and abandoned ourt of Britain; unless, I say, ye can show this, how can 'e, on the ground of your principles, justify the exciting nd stirring up the people "firmly to unite in the *abhorrence* f all such *writings*, and *measures*, as evince a desire and deign to break off the *happy* connexion we have hitherto enoyed with the kingdom of Great Britain, and our just and ecessary subordination to the king, and those who are awfully placed in authority under him." What a slap in he face is here! the men, who, in the very paragraph beore, have quietly and passively resigned up the ordering, ltering and disposal of kings and governments, into the ands of God, are now recalling their principles, and puting in for a share of the business. Is it possible, that the onclusion, which is here justly quoted, can any ways folow from the doctrine laid down! The inconsistency is too laring not to be seen; the absurdity too great not to be aughed at; and such as could only have been made by hose, whose understandings were darkened by the narrow nd crabbed spirit of a despairing political party; for ye re not to be considered as the whole body of the Quakers, ut only as a factional and fractional part thereof.

Here ends the examination of your Testimony; (which call upon no man to abhor, as ye have done, but only to ead and judge of fairly) to which I subjoin the following emark; "that the setting up and putting down of kings" nust certainly mean, the making him a king, who is yet not o, and the making him no king who is already one. And ray what hath this to do in the present case? We neither nean to *set up* nor to *put down*, neither to *make* nor to *unnake*, but to have nothing *to do* with them. Wherefore, your Testimony, in whatever light it is viewed, serves only to dishonor your judgment, and for many other reasons had better have been let alone than published.

1st, Because it tends to the decrease and reproach of all religion whatever, and it is of the utmost danger to society, to make it a party in political disputes.

2d, Because it exhibits a body of men, numbers of whom disavow the publishing of political testimonies, as being concerned therein and approvers thereof.

3d, Because it hath a tendency to undo that continental harmony and friendship which yourselves by your late liberal and charitable donations hath lent a hand to establish; and the preservation of which, is of the utmost consequence to us all.

And here without anger or resentment I bid you farewell. Sincerely wishing, that as men and Christians, ye may always fully and uninterruptedly enjoy every civil and religious right; and be, in your turn, the means of securing it to others; but that the example which ye have unwisely set, of mingling religion with politics, *may be disavowed and reprobated by every inhabitant of* AMERICA.

END OF EPISTLE TO QUAKERS.

THE CRISIS.

THE CRISIS.

NO. I.

ESE are the times that try men's souls. The sum-
oldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis,
from the service of his country; but he that stands
, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.
ny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have
onsolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the
glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we
ı too lightly: 'tis dearness only that gives every
its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price
ts goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celes-
article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Brit-
ith an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared
ıe has a right (*not only to* TAX) but "*to* BIND *us in* ALL
WHATSOEVER," and if being *bound in that manner*, is not
y, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon
Even the expression is impious, for so unlimited a
can belong only to God.
ether the independence of the continent was declar-
soon, or delayed too long, I will not now enter into
ırgument; my own simple opinion is, that had it been
nonths earlier, it would have been much better. We
t make a proper use of last winter, neither could we,
we were in a dependant state. However, the fault,
ere one, was all our own; we have none to blame but
ves. But no great deal it lost yet; all that Howe
en doing for this month past is rather a ravage than
quest, which the spirit of the Jerseys a year ago
have quickly repulsed, and which time and a little
tion will soon recover.

I have as little superstition in me as any man living, but my secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupportedly to perish, who have so earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war, by every decent method which wisdom could invent. Neither have I so much of the infidel in me, as to suppose that He has relinquished the government of the world, and given us up to the care of devils; and as I do not, I cannot see on what grounds the king of Britain can look up to heaven for help against us: a common murderer, a highwayman, or a house-breaker, has as good a pretence as he.

'Tis surprising to see how rapidly a panic will sometimes run through a country. All nations and ages have been subject to them: Britain has trembled like an ague at the report of a French fleet of flat bottomed boats; and in the fourteenth century the whole English army, after ravaging the kingdom of France, was driven back like men petrified with fear; and this brave exploit was performed by a few broken forces collected and headed by a woman, Joan of Arc. Would that heaven might inspire some Jersey maid to spirit up her countrymen, and save her fair fellow sufferers from ravage and ravishment! Yet panics, in some cases, have their uses; they produce as much good as hurt. Their duration is always short; the mind soon grows through them, and acquires a firmer habit than before. But their peculiar advantage is, that they are the touchstones of sincerity and hypocrisy, and bring things and men to light, which might otherwise have lain forever undiscovered. In fact, they have the same effect on secret traitors, which an imaginary apparition would have upon a private murderer. They sift out the hidden thoughts of man, and hold them up in public to the world. Many a disguised tory has lately shown his head, that shall penitentially solemnize with curses the day on which Howe arrived upon the Delaware.

As I was with the troops at fort Lee, and marched with them to the edge of Pennsylvania, I am well acquainted with many circumstances, which those who live at a distance know but little or nothing of. Our situation there was exceedingly cramped, the place being a narrow neck of land between the North River and the Hackensack. Our force was inconsiderable, being not one fourth so great as Howe could bring against us. We had no army at hand

to have relieved the garrison, had we shut ourselves up and stood on our defence. Our ammunition, light artillery, and the best part of our stores, had been removed, on the apprehension that Howe would endeavor to penetrate the Jerseys, in which case fort Lee could be of no use to us; for it must occur to every thinking man, whether in the army or not, that these kind of field forts are only for temporary purposes, and last in use no longer than the enemy directs his force against the particular object, which such forts are raised to defend. Such was our situation and condition at fort Lee on the morning of the 20th of November, when an officer arrived with information that the enemy with 200 boats had landed about seven miles above: Major General Greene, who commanded the garrison, immediately ordered them under arms, and sent express to General Washington at the town of Hackensack, distant by the way of the ferry six miles. Our first object was to secure the bridge over the Hackensack, which laid up the river between the enemy and us, about six miles from us, and three from them. General Washington arrived in about three quarters of an hour, and marched at the head of the troops towards the bridge, which place I expected we should have a brush for; however they did not choose to dispute it with us, and the greatest part of our troops went over the bridge, the rest over the ferry, except some which passed at a mill on a small creek, between the bridge and the ferry, and made their way through some marshy grounds up to the town of Hackensack, and there passed the river. We brought off as much baggage as the wagons could contain, the rest was lost. The simple object was to bring off the garrison, and march them on till they could be strengthened by the Jersey or Pennsylvania militia, so as to be enabled to make a stand. We staid four days at Newark, collected our out-posts with some of the Jersey militia, and marched out twice to meet the enemy, on being informed that they were advancing, though our numbers were greatly inferior to theirs. Howe, in my little opinion, committed a great error in generalship in not throwing a body of forces off from Staten island through Amboy, by which means he might have seized all our stores at Brunswick, and intercepted our march into Pennsylvania: but if we believe the power of hell to be limited, we must likewise believe that their agents are under some providential control.

I shall not now attempt to give all the particulars of our retreat to the Delaware; suffice it for the present to say, that both officers and men, though greatly harrassed and fatigued, frequently without rest, covering, or provision, the inevitable consequences of a long retreat, bore it with a manly and martial spirit. All their wishes centred in one, which was, that the country would turn out and help them to drive the enemy back. Voltaire has remarked that king William never appeared to full advantage but in difficulties and in action; the same remark may be made on General Washington, for the character fits him. There is a natural firmness in some minds which cannot be unlocked by trifles, but which, when unlocked, discovers a cabinet of fortitude; and I reckon it among those kind of public blessings, which we do not immediately see, that God hath blest him with uninterrupted health, and given him a mind that can even flourish upon care.

I shall conclude this paper with some miscellaneous remarks on the state of our affairs; and shall begin with asking the following question, Why is it that the enemy have left the New-England provinces, and made these middle ones the seat of war? The answer is easy: New-England is not infested with tories, and we are. I have been tender in raising the cry against these men, and used numberless arguments to show them their danger, but it will not do to sacrifice a world either to their folly or their baseness. The period is now arrived, in which either they or we must change our sentiments, or one or both must fall. And what is a tory? Good God! what is he? I should not be afraid to go with an hundred whigs against a thousand tories, were they to attempt to get into arms. Every tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, never can be brave.

But, before the line of irrecoverable separation be drawn between us, let us reason the matter together: your conduct is an invitation to the enemy, yet not one in a thousand of you has heart enough to join him. Howe is as much deceived by you as the American cause is injured by you. He expects you will all take up arms, and flock to his standard with muskets on your shoulders. Your opinions are of no use to him, unless you support him personally, for 'tis soldiers, and not tories, that he wants.

nce felt all that kind of anger, which a man ought to against the mean principles that are held by the to- a noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was stand- t his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about or nine years old, as I ever saw, and after speaking iind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with infatherly expression, "*Well! give me peace in my day.*" ı man lives on the continent but fully believes that a ation must some time or other finally take place, and ierous parent should have said, "*If there must be trou- t it be in my day, that my child may have peace;*" and this e reflection, well applied, is sufficient to awaken every to duty. Not a place upon earth might be so happy merica. Her situation is remote from all the wrang- world, and she has nothing to do but to trade with . A man can distinguish in himself between temper principle, and I am as confident, as I am that God gov- the world, that America will never be happy till she clear of foreign dominion. Wars, without ceasing, will k out till that period arrives, and the continent must in nd be conqueror; for though the flame of liberty may times cease to shine, the coal can never expire.

nerica did not, nor does not want force; but she want- proper application of that force. Wisdom is not the hase of a day, and it is no wonder that we should err e first setting off. From an excess of tenderness, we unwilling to raise an army, and trusted our cause to emporary defence of a well-meaning militia. A sum- s experience has now taught us better; yet with those ɔs, while they were collected, we were able to set ıds to the progress of the enemy, and, thank God! are again assembling. I always considered militia as best troops in the world for a sudden exertion, but will not do for a long campaign. Howe, it is proba- will make an attempt on this city; should he fail on side the Delaware, he is ruined: if he succeeds, our e is not ruined. He stakes all on his side against a on ours; admitting he succeeds, the consequence will hat armies from both ends of the continent will march ısist their suffering friends in the middle states; for he ıot go every where, it is impossible. I consider Howe ıe greatest enemy the tories have; he is bringing a into their country, which, had it not been for him and ly for themselves, they had been clear of. Should he

now be expelled, I wish with all the devotion of a C tian, that the names of whig and tory may never mor mentioned; but should the tories give him encourage to come, or assistance if he come, I as sincerely wish our next year's arms may expel them from the conti and the congress appropriate their possessions to th lief of those who have suffered in well-doing. A s successful battle next year will settle the whole. A ca could carry on a two years war by the confiscati the property of disaffected persons, and be made h by their expulsion. Say not that this is revenge, c rather the soft resentment of a suffering people, who, ing no object in view but the *good* of *all*, have staked *own all* upon a seemingly doubtful event. Yet it is to argue against determined hardness; eloquence strike the ear, and the language of sorrow draw fortl tear of compassion, but nothing can reach the heart th steeled with prejudice.

Quitting this class of men, I turn with the warm a of a friend to those who have nobly stood, and are ye termined to stand the matter out: I call not upon a but upon all: not on *this* state or *that* state, but on state; up and help us; lay your shoulders to the wh better have too much force than too little, when so g an object is at stake. Let it be told to the future w that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope virtue could survive, that the city and the country, al ed at one common danger, came forth to meet and tc pulse it. Say not, that thousands are gone, turn out tens of thousands; throw not the burden of the day Providence, but "*show your faith by your works*," that may bless you. It matters not where you live, or rank of life you hold, the evil or the blessing will r you all.' The far and the near, the home counties an back, the rich and the poor, will suffer or rejoice a The heart that feels not now, is dead: the blood of children will curse his cowardice, who shrinks back time when a little might have saved the whole, and n *them* happy. I love the man that can smile in trou that can gather strength from distress, and grow brav reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approve conduct, will pursue his principles unto death. My line of reasoning is to myself as straight and clear

ray of light. Not all the treasures of the world, so far as I believe, could have induced me to support an offensive war, for I think it murder; but if a thief breaks into my house, burns and destroys my property, and kills or threatens to kill me, or those that are in it, and to "*bind me in all cases whatsoever*," to his absolute will, am I to suffer it? What signifies it to me, whether he who does it is a king or a common man; my countryman or not my countryman? whether it be done by an individual villain, or an army of them? If we reason to the root of things we shall find no difference; neither can any just cause be assigned why we should punish in the one case and pardon in the other. Let them call me rebel, and welcome, I feel no concern from it; but I should suffer the misery of devils, were I to make a whore of my soul by swearing allegiance to one whose character is that of a sottish, stupid, stubborn, worthless, brutish man. I conceive likewise a horrid idea in receiving mercy from a being, who at the last day shall be shrieking to the rocks and mountains to cover him, and fleeing with terror from the orphan, the widow, and the slain of America.

There are cases which cannot be overdone by language, and this is one. There are persons too who see not the full extent of the evil which threatens them, they solace themselves with hopes that the enemy, if he succeed, will be merciful. It is the madness of folly to expect mercy from those who have refused to do justice; and even mercy, where conquest is the object, is only a trick of war: the cunning of the fox is as murderous as the violence of the wolf; and we ought to guard equally against both. Howe's first object is partly by threats and partly by promises, to terrify or seduce the people to deliver up their arms and receive mercy. The ministry recommended the same plan to Gage, and this is what the tories call making their peace; "*a peace which passeth all understanding*" *indeed!* A peace which would be the immediate forerunner of a worse ruin than any we yet have thought of. Ye men of Pennsylvania, do reason upon these things! Were the back counties to give up their arms, they would fall an easy prey to the Indians, who are all alarmed: this perhaps is what some tories would not be sorry for. Were the home counties to deliver up their arms, they would be exposed to the resentment of the back counties, who would then have it in their power to chastise their defection at

pleasure. And were any one state to give up its arms *that* state must be garrisoned by all Howe's army of Britons and Hessians to preserve it from the anger of the rest Mutual fear is a principal link in the chain of mutual love and wo be to that state that breaks the compact. How is mercifully inviting you to barbarous destruction, and men must be either rogues or fools that will not see it I dwell not upon the powers of imagination; I bring reason to your ears; and in language as plain as A, B, C hold up truth to your eyes.

I thank God that I fear not. I see no real cause for fear I know our situation well, and can see the way out of it While our army was collected, Howe dared not risk a battle, and it is no credit to him that he decamped from the White Plains, and waited a mean opportunity to ravage the defenceless Jerseys; but it is great credit to us, that with a handful of men, we sustained an orderly retreat for near an hundred miles, brought off our ammunition, all our field pieces, the greatest part of our stores, and had four rivers to pass. None can say that our retreat was precipitate, for we were near three weeks in performing it, that the country might have time to come in. Twice we marched back to meet the enemy and remained on till dark. The sign of fear was not seen in our camp, and had not some of the cowardly and disaffected inhabitants spread false alarms through the country, the Jerseys had never been ravaged. Once more we are again collected and collecting, our new army at both ends of the continent is recruiting fast, and we shall be able to open the next campaign with sixty thousand men, well armed and cloathed. This is our situation, and who will may know it. By perseverance and fortitude we have the prospect of a glorious issue; by cowardice and submission, the sad choice of a variety of evils—a ravaged country—a depopulated city—habitations without safety, and slavery without hope—our homes turned into barracks and bawdy-houses for Hessians, and a future race to provide for, whose fathers we shall doubt of. Look on this picture and weep over it! and if there yet remains one thoughtless wretch who believes it not, let him suffer it unlamented.

COMMON SENSE.

December 23, 1776.

THE CRISIS.

NO. II.

TO LORD HOWE.

> What's in the name of *lord* that I should fear
> To bring my grievance to the public ear?
> *Churchill.*

UNIVERSAL empire is the prerogative of a writer. His concerns are with all mankind, and though he cannot command their obedience, he can assign them their duty. The Republic of Letters is more ancient than monarchy, and of far higher character in the world than the vassal court of Britain; he that rebels against reason is a real rebel, but he that in defence of reason, rebels against tyranny, has a better title to "*Defender of the Faith*," than George the third.

As a military man your lordship may hold out the sword of war, and call it the "*ultima ratio regum:*", *the last reason of kings;* we in return can show you the sword of justice, and call it, "the best scourge of tyrants." The first of these two may threaten, or even frighten for a while, and cast a sickly languor over an insulted people, but reason will soon recover the debauch, and restore them again to tranquil fortitude. Your lordship, I find, has now commenced author, and published a Proclamation; I have published a Crisis; as they stand, they are the antipodes of each other; both cannot rise at once, and one of them must descend: and so quick is the revolution of things, that your lordship's performance, I see, has already fallen many degrees from its first place, and is now just visible on the edge of the political horizon.

It is surprising to what a pitch of infatuation, blind folly and obstinacy will carry mankind, and your lordship's drowsy proclamation is a proof that it does not even quit them in their sleep. Perhaps you thought America too was taking a nap, and therefore chose, like Satan to Eve,

to whisper the delusion softly, lest you should awaken her. This continent, sir, is too extensive to sleep all at once, and too watchful, even in its slumbers, not to startle at the unhallowed foot of an invader. You may issue your proclamations, and welcome, for we have learned to "reverence ourselves," and scorn the insulting ruffian that employs you. America, for your deceased brother's sake, would gladly have shown you respect, and it is a new aggravation to her feelings, that Howe should be forgetful, and raise his sword against those, who at their own charge raised a monument to his brother. But your master has commanded, and you have not enough of nature left to refuse. Surely! there must be something strangely degenerating in the love of monarchy, that can so completely wear a man down to an ingrate, and make him proud to lick the dust that kings have trod upon. A few more years, should you survive them, will bestow on you the title of "an old man:" and in some hour of future reflection you may probably find the fitness of Wolsey's despairing penitence—"had I served my God as faithfully as I have served my king, he would not thus have forsaken me in my old age."

The character you appear to us in, is truly ridiculous. Your friends, the tories, announced your coming, with high descriptions of your unlimited powers; but your proclamation has given them the lie, by showing you to be a commissioner without authority. Had your powers been ever so great, they were nothing to us, further than we pleased; because we had the same right which other nations had, to do what we thought was best. "*The* UNITED STATES *of* AMERICA" will sound as pompously in the world or in history, as "the kingdom of Great Britain;" the character of *General Washington* will fill a page with as much lustre as that of *Lord Howe:* and the *congress* have as much right to command the *king and parliament* in London, to desist from legislation, as *they* or *you* have to command the congress. Only suppose how laughable such an edict would appear from us, and then, in that merry mood, do but turn the tables upon yourself, and you will see how your proclamation is received here. Having thus placed you in a proper position in which you may have a full view of your folly, and learn to despise it, I hold up to you, for that purpose, the following quotation from your own lunarian proclamation.—"And we (lord Howe and general

Howe) do command (and in his majesty's name forsooth) all such persons as are assembled together, under the name of general or provincial congresses, committees, conventions or other associations, by whatever name or names known and distinguished, to desist and cease from all such treasonable actings and doings."

You introduce your proclamation by referring to your declarations of the 14th of July and 19th of September. In the last of these, you sunk yourself below the character of a private gentleman. That I may not seem to accuse you unjustly, I shall state the circumstance: by a verbal invitation of yours, communicated to congress by General Sullivan, then a prisoner on his parole, you signified your desire of conferring with some members of that body as private gentlemen. It was beneath the dignity of the American congress to pay any regard to a message that at best was but a genteel affront, and had too much of the ministerial complexion of tampering with private persons; and which might probably have been the case, had the gentlemen who were deputed on the business, possessed that kind of easy virtue which an English courtier is so truly distinguished by. Your request however was complied with, for honest men are naturally more tender of their civil than their political fame. The interview ended as every sensible man thought it would; for your lordship knows, as well as the writer of the Crisis, that it is impossible for the king of England to promise the repeal, or even the revisal of any acts of parliament; wherefore, on your part, you had nothing to say, more than to request, in the room of demanding, the entire surrender of the continent; and then, if that was complied with, to promise that the inhabitants should escape with their lives. This was the upshot of the conference. You informed the conferees that you were too months in soliciting these powers. We ask, what powers? for as commissioner you have none. If you mean the power of pardoning, it is an oblique proof that your master was determined to sacrifice all before him; and that you were two months in dissuading him from his purpose. Another evidence of his savage obstinacy! From your own account of the matter we may justly draw these two conclusions: 1st, That you serve a monster; and 2d, That never was a messenger sent on a more foolish errand than yourself. This plain language may perhaps sound uncouthly to an ear vitiated by courtly refinements; but

words were made for use, and the fault lies in deserving them, or the abuse in applying them unfairly.

Soon after your return to New-York, you published a very illiberal and unmanly handbill against the congress; for it was certainly stepping out of the line of common civility, first to screen your national pride by soliciting an interview with them as private gentlemen, and in the conclusion to endeavor to deceive the multitude by making a handbill attack on the whole body of the congress; you got them together under one name, and abused them under another. But the king you serve, and the cause you support, afford you so few instances of acting the gentleman, that out of pity to your situation the congress pardoned the insult by taking no notice of it.

You say in that handbill, "that they, the congress, disavowed every purpose for reconciliation not consonant with their extravagant and inadmissible claim of independence." Why, God bless me! what have you to do with our independence? We ask no leave of yours to set it up; we ask no money of yours to support it; we can do better without your fleets and armies than with them; you may soon have enough to do to protect yourselves without being burdened with us. We are very willing to be at peace with you, to buy of you and sell to you, and, like young beginners in the world, to work for our own living; therefore, why do you put yourselves out of cash, when we know you cannot spare it, and we do not desire you to run into debt? I am willing, sir, that you should see your folly in every point of view I can place it in, and for that reason descend sometimes to tell you in jest what I wish you to see in earnest. But to be more serious with you, why do you say, "their independence?" To set you right, sir, we tell you, that the independency is ours, not theirs. The congress were authorised by every state on the continent to publish it to all the world, and in so doing are not to be considered as the inventors, but only as the heralds that proclaimed it, or the office from which the sense of the people received a legal form; and it was as much as any or all their heads were worth, to have treated with you on the subject of submission under any name whatever. But we know the men in whom we have trusted; can England say the same of her parliament?

I come now more particularly to your proclamation of the 30th of November last. Had you gained an entire

conquest over all the armies of America, and then put forth a proclamation, offering (what you call) mercy, your conduct would have had some specious show of humanity; but to creep by surprise into a province, and there endeavor to terrify and seduce the inhabitants from their just allegiance to the rest by promises, which you neither meant, nor were able to fulfil, is both cruel and unmanly: cruel in its effects; because, unless you can keep all the ground you have marched over, how are you, in the words of your proclamation to secure to your proselytes "the enjoyment of their property?" What is to become either of your new adopted subjects, or your old friends the tories, in Burlington, Bordentown, Trenton, Mountholly, and many other places, where you proudly lorded it for a few days, and then fled with the precipitation of a pursued thief? What, I say, is to become of those wretches? What is to become of those who went over to you from this city and state? What more can you say to them than "shift for yourselves?" Or what more can they hope for than to wander like vagabonds over the face of the earth? You may now tell them to take their leave of America, and all that once was theirs. Recommend them, for consolation, to your master's court; there perhaps they may make a shift to live on the scraps of some dangling parasite, and choose companions among thousands like themselves. A traitor is the foulest fiend on earth.

In a political sense we ought to thank you for thus bequeathing estates to the continent; we shall soon, at this rate be able to carry on a war without expense, and grow rich by the ill policy of lord Howe, and the generous defection of the tories. Had you set your foot into this city, you would have bestowed estates upon us which we never thought of, by bringing forth traitors we were unwilling to suspect. But these men, you'll say, "are his majesty's most faithful subjects;" let that honor then be all their fortune, and let his majesty take them to himself.

I am now thoroughly disgusted with them; they live in ungrateful ease, and bend their whole minds to mischief. It seems as if God had given them over to a spirit of infidelity, and that they are open to conviction in no other line but that of punishment. It is time to have done with tarring, feathering, carting, and taking securities for their future good behaviour; every sensible man must feel a conscious shame at seeing a poor fellow hawked for a show

about the streets, when it is known he is only the tool of some principal villain, biassed into his offence by the force of false reasoning, or bribed thereto, through sad necessity. We dishonor ourselves by attacking such trifling characters while greater ones are suffered to escape; 'tis our duty to find *them* out, and their proper punishment would be to exile them from the continent for ever. The circle of them is not so great as some imagine; the influence of a few have tainted many who are not naturally corrupt. A continual circulation of lies among those who are not much in the way of hearing them contradicted, will in time pass for truth; and the crime lies not in the believer but the inventor. I am not for declaring war against every man that appears not so warm as myself: difference of constitution, temper, habit of speaking, and many other things, will go a great way in fixing the outward character of a man, yet simple honesty may remain at bottom. Some men have naturally a military turn, and can brave hardships and the risk of life with a cheerful face; others have not; no slavery appears to them so great as the fatigue of arms, and no terror so powerful as that of personal danger: What can we say? We cannot alter nature, neither ought we to punish the son because the father begot him in a cowardly mood. However, I believe most men have more courage than they know of, and that a little at first is enough to begin with. I knew the time when I thought that the whistling of a cannon ball would have frightened me almost to death: but I have since tried it, and find that I can stand it with as little discomposure, and, I believe, with a much easier conscience than your lordship. The same dread would return to me again were I in your situation, for my solemn belief of your cause is, that it is hellish and damnable, and under that conviction every thinking man's heart *must* fail him.

From a concern that a good cause should be dishonored by the least disunion among us, I said in my former paper, No. I. "That should the enemy now be expelled, I wish, with all the sincerity of a Christian, that the names of whig and tory might never more be mentioned," but there is a knot of men among us of such a venomous cast, that they will not admit even one's good wishes to act in their favor. Instead of rejoicing that heaven had, as it were, providentially preserved this city from plunder and destruction, by delivering so great a part of the enemy into our hands with

so little effusion of blood, they stubbornly affected to disbelieve it till within an hour, nay, half an hour, of the prisoners arriving; and the Quakers put forth a testimony, dated the 20th of December, signed, "John Pemberton," declaring their attachment to the British government.* These men are continually harping on the great sin of *our* bearing arms, but the king of Britain may lay waste the world in blood and famine, and they, poor fallen souls, have nothing to say.

In some future paper I intend to distinguish between the different kind of persons who have been denominated tories: for this I am clear in, that all are not so who have been called so, nor all men whigs who were once thought so; and as I mean not to conceal the name of any true friend when there shall be occasion to mention him, neither will I that of an enemy who ought to be known, let his rank, station or religion be what it may. Much pains have been taken by some to set your lordship's private character in an amiable light, but as it has chiefly been done by men who know nothing about you, and who are no ways remarkable for their attachment to us, we have no just authority for believing it. George the third was imposed upon us by the same arts, but *time*, at length, has done him justice, and the same fate may probably attend your lordship. Your avowed purpose here, is to kill, conquer, plunder, pardon, and enslave: and the ravages of your army through the Jerseys have been marked with as much barbarism as if you had openly professed yourself the prince of ruffians; not even the appearance of humanity has been preserved either on the march or the retreat of your troops; no general order that I could ever learn, has ever been issued to prevent or even forbid your troops from robbery, wherever they came, and the only instance of justice, if it can be called such, which has distinguished you for impartiality, is, that you treated and plundered all alike; what could not be carried away has been destroyed, and mahogany furniture has been

* I have ever been careful of charging offences upon whole societies of men, but as the paper referred to is put forth by an unknown set of men, who claim to themselves the right of representing the whole: and while the whole society of Quakers admit its validity by a silent acknowledgment, it is impossible that any distinction can be made by the public: and the more so, because the New-York paper of the 30th of December, printed by permission of our enemies, says that "the Quakers begin to speak openly of their attachment to the British constitution." We are certain that we have many friends among them, and wish to know them.

deliberately laid on fire for fuel, rather than the men should be fatigued with cutting wood.* There was a time when the whigs confided much in your supposed candor, and the tories rested themselves in your favor; the experiments have now been made, and failed; in every town, nay every cottage, in the Jerseys, where your arms have been, is a testimony against you. How you may rest under this sacrifice of character I know not; but this I know, that you sleep and rise with the daily curses of thousands upon you; perhaps the misery which the tories have suffered by your proffered mercy may give them some claim to their country's pity, and be in the end the best favor you could show them.

In a folio general-order book belonging to Col. Rhol's battalion, taken at Trenton, and now in the possession of the council of safety for this state, the following barbarous order is frequently repeated, "His excellency the *commander in chief* orders, that all inhabitants who shall be found with arms, not having an officer with them, shall be immediately taken and hung up." How many you may thus have privately sacrificed we know not, and the account can only be settled in another world. Your treatment of prisoners, in order to distress them to enlist into your infernal service, is not to be equalled by any instance in Europe. Yet this is the humane lord Howe and his brother, whom the tories and their three-quarter kindred the Quakers, or some of them at least, have been holding up for patterns of justice and mercy!

A bad cause will ever be supported by bad means, and bad men, and whoever will be at the pains of examining strictly into things, will find that one and the same spirit of oppression and impiety, more or less, governs through your whole party in both countries: not many day ago, I accidentally fell in company with a person of this city noted for espousing your cause, and on my remarking to him, "that it appeared clear to me, by the late providential turn of affairs, that God Almighty was visibly on our side," he replied, "We care nothing for that, you may have Him, and welcome; if we have but enough of the devil on our side we shall do." However carelessly this might be spoken,

* As some people may doubt the truth of such wanton destruction, I think it necessary to inform them, that one of the people called Quakers, who lives at Trenton, gave me this information, at the house of Mr. Michael Hutchinson (one of the same profession) who lives near Trenton ferry on the Pennsylvania side, Mr. Hutchinson being present.

matters not, 'tis still the insensible principle that directs all your conduct, and will at last most assuredly deceive and ruin you.

If ever a nation was mad and foolish, blind to its own interest and bent on its own destruction, it is Britain. There are such things as national sins, and though the punishment of individuals may be reserved to *another* world, national punishment can only be inflicted in *this* world. Britain, as a nation, is in my inmost belief the greatest and most ungrateful offender against God on the face of the whole earth: blessed with all the commerce she could wish for, and furnished by a vast extension of dominion, with the means of civilizing both the eastern and western world, she has made no other use of both than proudly to idolize her own "thunder," and rip up the bowels of whole countries for what she could get:—Like Alexander she has made war her sport, and inflicted misery for prodigality's sake. The blood of India is not yet repaid, nor the wretchedness of Africa yet requited. Of late she has enlarged her list of national cruelties, by her butcherly destruction of the Caribbs of St. Vincents, and returning an answer by the sword to the meek prayer for "*Peace, liberty and safety.*" These are serious things, and whatever a foolish tyrant, a debauched court, a trafficing legislature or a blinded people may think, the national account with heaven must some day or other be settled: all countries have sooner or later been called to their reckoning; the proudest empires have sunk when the balance was struck; and Britain, like an individual penitent, must undergo her day of sorrow, and the sooner it happens to her the better: as I wish it over. I wish it to come, but withal wish that it may be as light as possible.

Perhaps your lordship has no taste for serious things; by your connexions in England I should suppose not: therefore I shall drop this part of the subject, and take it up in a line in which you will better understand me.

By what means, may I ask, do you expect to conquer America? If you could not effect it in the summer, when our army was less than yours, nor in the winter, when we had none, how are you to do it? In point of generalship you have been outwitted, and in point of fortitude outdone; your advantages turn out to your loss, and show us that it is in our power to ruin you by gifts: like a game of drafts, we can move out of *one* square to let you come in, in order

that we may afterwards take two or three for one; and as we can always keep a double corner for ourselves, we can always prevent a total defeat. You cannot be so insensible, as not to see that we have two to one the advantage of you, because we conquer by a drawn game, and you lose by it. Burgoyne might have taught your lordship this knowledge; he has been long a student in the doctrine of chances.

I have no other idea of conquering countries than by subduing the armies which defend them: have you done this, or can you do it? If you have not, it would be civil in you to let your proclamations alone for the present; otherwise, you will ruin more tories by your grace and favor, than you will whigs by your arms.

Were you to obtain possession of this city, you would not know what to do with it more than to plunder it. To hold it in the manner you hold New-York, would be an additional dead weight upon your hands: and if a general conquest is your object, you had better be without the city than with it. When you have defeated all our armies, the cities will fall into your hands of themselves; but to creep into them in the manner you got into Princeton, Trenton, &c. is like robbing an orchard in the night before the fruit be ripe, and running away in the morning. Your experiment in the Jerseys is sufficient to teach you that you have something more to do than barely to get into other people's houses; and your new converts, to whom you promised all manner of protection, and seduced into new guilt by pardoning them from their former virtues, must begin to have a very contemptible opinion both of your power and your policy. Your authority in the Jerseys is now reduced to the small circle which your army occupies, and your proclamation is no where else seen unless it be to be laughed at. The mighty subduers of the continent have retreated into a nut-shell, and the proud forgivers of our sins are fled from those they came to pardon; and all this at a time when they were despatching vessel after vessel to England with the great news of every day. In short, you have managed your Jersey expedition so very dexterously, that the dead only are conquerors, because none will dispute the ground with them.

In all the wars which you have formerly been concerned in, you had only armies to contend with; in this case you have both an army and a country to combat with. In for-

mer wars, the countries followed the fate of their capitals; Canada fell with Quebec, and Minorca with Port Mahon or St. Phillips; by subduing those, the conquerors opened a way into, and became masters of the country: here it is otherwise; if you get possession of a city here, you are obliged to shut yourselves up in it, and can make no other use of it, than to spend your country's money in. This is all the advantage you have drawn from New-York; and you would draw less from Philadelphia, because it requires more force to keep it, and is much further from the sea. A pretty figure you and the tories would cut in this city, with a river full of ice, and a town full of fire; for the immediate consequence of your getting here would be, that you would be cannonaded out again, and the tories be obliged to make good the damage; and this sooner or later will be the fate of New-York.

I wish to see the city saved, not so much from military as from natural motives. 'Tis the hiding place of women and children, and lord Howe's proper business is with our armies. When I put all the circumstances together which ought to be taken, I laugh at your notion of conquering America. Because you lived in a little country, where an army might run over the whole in a few days, and where a single company of soldiers might put a multitude to the route, you expected to find it the same here. It is plain that you brought over with you all the narrow notions you were bred up with, and imagined that a proclamation in the king's name was to do great things; but Englishmen always travel for knowledge, and your lordship, I hope, will return, if you return at all, much wiser than you came.

We may be surprised by events we did not expect, and in that interval of recollection you may gain some temporary advantage: such was the case a few weeks ago, but we soon ripen again into reason, collect our strength, and while you are preparing for a triumph, we come upon you with a defeat. Such it has been, and such it would be were you to try it an hundred times over. Were you to garrison the places you might march over, in order to secure their subjection (for remember you can do it by no other means,) your army would be like a stream of water running to nothing. By the time you extended from New-York to Virginia, you would be reduced to a string of drops not capable of hanging together; while we, by retreating from state to state, like a river turning back upon itself, would

acquire strength in the same proportion as you lost it, and in the end be capable of overwhelming you. The country in the mean time would suffer, but it is a day of suffering and we ought to expect it. What we contend for is worthy the affliction we may go through. If we get but bread to eat, and any kind of raiment to put on, we ought not only to be contented, but thankful. More than *that* we ought not to look for, and less than *that* heaven has not yet suffered us to want. He that would sell his birth right for a little *salt*, is as worthless as he who sold it for *porridge* without salt. And he that would part with it for a gay coat, or a *plain* coat, ought forever to be a slave in buff. What are salt, sugar and finery, to the inestimable blessings of "Liberty and safety!" Or what are the inconveniences of a few months to the tributary bondage of ages? The meanest peasant in America, blest with these sentiments, is a happy man compared with a New-York tory; he can eat his morsel without repining, and when he has done, can sweeten it with a repast of wholesome air; he can take his child by the hand and bless it, without feeling the conscious shame of neglecting a parent's duty.

In publishing these remarks I have several objects in view.

On your part they are to expose the folly of your pretended authority as a commissioner; the wickedness of your cause in general; and the impossibility of your conquering us at any rate. On the part of the public my intention is, to show them their true and solid interest; to encourage them to their own good, to remove the fears and falsities which bad men have spread, and weak men have encouraged; and to excite in all men a love for union, and a cheerfulness for duty.

I shall submit one more case to you respecting your conquest of this country, and then proceed to new observations.

Suppose our armies in every part of this continent were immediately to disperse, every man to his home, or where else he might be safe, and engage to re-assemble again on a certain future day; it is clear that you would then have no army to contend with, yet you would be as much at a loss in that case as you are now; you would be afraid to send your troops in parties over the continent, either to disarm, or prevent us from assembling, lest they should not return; and while you kept them together, having no army

of ours to dispute with, you could not call it a conquest; you might furnish out a pompous page in the London Gazette or a New-York paper, but when we returned at the appointed time, you would have the same work to do that you had at first.

It has been the folly of Britain to suppose herself more powerful than she really is, and by that means has arrogated to herself a rank in the world she is not entitled to: for more than this century past she has not been able to carry on a war without foreign assistance. In Marlborough's campaigns, and from that day to this, the number of German troops and officers assisting her have been about equal with her own; ten thousand Hessians were sent to England last war to protect her from a French invasion; and she would have cut but a poor figure in her Canadian and West-Indian expeditions, had not America been lavish both of her money and men to help her along. The only instance in which she was engaged singly, that I can recollect, was against the rebellion in Scotland, in the years 1745 and 1746, and in that, out of three battles, she was twice beaten, till by thus reducing their numbers, (as we shall yours,) and taking a supply ship that was coming to Scotland with clothes, arms and money (as we have often done) she was at last enabled to defeat them. England was never famous by land; her officers have generally been suspected of cowardice, have more of the air of a dancing-master than a soldier, and by the samples which we have taken prisoners, we give the preference to ourselves. Her strength of late, has lain in her extravagance; but as her finances and her credit are now low, her sinews in that line begin to fail fast. As a nation she is the poorest in Europe; for were the whole kingdom, and all that is in it, to be put up to sale like the estate of a bankrupt, it would not fetch as much as she owes; yet this thoughtless wretch must go to war, and with the avowed design too of making us beasts of burden, to support her in riot and debauchery, and to assist her afterwards in distressing those nations who are now our best friends. This ingratitude may suit a tory, or the unchristian peevishness of a fallen Quaker, but none else.

'Tis the unhappy temper of the English to be pleased with any war, right or wrong, be it but successful; but they soon grow discontented with ill fortune, and it is an even chance that they are as clamorous for peace next

summer, as the king and his ministers were for war last winter. In this natural view of things, your lordship stands in a very critical situation: your whole character is now staked upon your laurels; if they wither, you wither with them; if they flourish, you cannot live long to look at them; and at any rate, the black account hereafter is not far off. What lately appeared to us misfortunes, were only blessings in disguise; and the seeming advantages on your side have turned out to our profit. Even our loss of this city, as far as we can see, might be a principal gain to us: the more surface you spread over, the thinner you will be, and the easier wiped away; and our consolation under that apparent disaster would be that the estates of the tories would become securities for the repairs. In short, there is no old ground we can fail upon, but some new foundation rises again to support us. "We have put, sir, our hands to the plough, and cursed be he that looketh back."

Your king, in his speech to parliament last spring, declared, "That he had no doubt but the great force they had enabled him to send to America, would effectually reduce the rebellious colonies." It has not, neither can it; but it has done just enough to lay the foundation of its own next year's ruin. You are sensible that you left England in a divided, distracted state of politics, and, by the command you had here, you became a principal prop in the court party; their fortunes rest on yours; by a single express you can fix their value with the public, and the degree to which their spirits shall rise or fall; they are in your hands as stock, and you have the secret of the *alley* with you. Thus situated and connected, you become the unintentional mechanical instrument of your own and their overthrow. The king and his ministers put conquest out of doubt, and the credit of both depended on the proof. To support them in the interim, it was necessary that you should make the most of every thing; and we can tell by Hugh Gaine's New-York paper what the complexion of the London Gazette is. With such a list of victories the nation cannot expect you will ask new supplies; and to confess your want of them, would give the lie to your triumphs, and impeach the king and his ministers of treasonable deception. If you make the necessary demand at home, your party sinks; if you make it not you sink yourself; to ask it now is too late, and to ask it before was too soon, and unless it arrive quickly will be of no use. In

short, the part you have to act, cannot be acted; and I am fully persuaded that all you have to trust to is, to do the best you can with what force you have got, or little more. Though we have greatly exceeded you in point of generalship and bravery of men, yet, as a people, we have not entered into the full soul of enterprise; for I, who know England and the disposition of the people well, am confident, that it is easier for us to effect a revolution there, than you a conquest here; a few thousand men landed in England with the declared design of deposing the present king, bringing his ministers to trial, and setting up the duke of Gloucester in his stead, would assuredly carry their point, while you were grovelling here ignorant of the matter. As I send all my papers to England, this, like Common Sense, will find its way there; and though it may put one party on their guard, it will inform the other and the nation in general of our design to help them.

Thus far, sir, I have endeavored to give you a picture of present affairs: you may draw from it what conclusions you please. I wish as well to the true prosperity of England as you can, but I consider INDEPENDENCE *as America's natural right and interest*, and never could see any real disservice it would be to Britain. If an English merchant receives an order, and is paid for it, it signifies nothing to him who governs the country. This is my creed of politics. If I have any where expressed myself over-warmly, 'tis from a fixed, immoveable hatred I have, and ever had, to cruel men and cruel measures. I have likewise an aversion to monarchy, as being too debasing to the dignity of man; but I never troubled others with my notions till very lately, nor ever published a syllable in England in my life. What I write is pure nature, and my pen and my soul have ever gone together. My writings I have always given away, reserving only the expense of printing and paper, and sometimes not even that. I never courted either fame or interest, and my manner of life, to those who know it, will justify what I say. My study is to be useful, and if your lordship loves mankind as well as I do, you would, seeing you cannot conquer us, cast about and lend your hand towards accomplishing a peace. Our independence, with God's blessing, we will maintain against all the world; but as we wish to avoid evil ourselves, we wish not to inflict it on others. I am never over-inquisitive into the secrets of the cabinet, but I have some notion, that if you

neglect the present opportunity, that it will not be in our power to make a separate peace with you afterwards; for whatever treaties or alliances we form, we shall most faithfully abide by; wherefore you may be deceived if you think you can make it with us at any time. A lasting independent peace is my wish, end and aim; and to accomplish that, "*I pray God the* Americans *may never be defeated, and I trust while they have good officers, and are well commanded,*" and willing to be commanded, "*that they* NEVER WILL BE."

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Jan. 13, 1777.

THE CRISIS.

NO. III.

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In the progress of politics, as in the common occurrences of life, we are not only apt to forget the ground we have travelled over, but frequently neglect to gather up experience as we go. We expend, if I may so say, the knowledge of every day on the circumstances that produce it, and journey on in search of new matter and new refinements: but as it is pleasant and sometimes useful to look back even to the first periods of infancy and trace the turns and windings through which we have passed, so we may likewise derive many advantages by halting a while in our political career, and taking a review of the wondrous complicated labyrinth of little more than yesterday.

Truly, may we say, that never did men grow old in so short a time! We have crowded the business of an age into the compass of a few months, and have been driven through such a rapid succession of things, that for the want of leisure to think, we unavoidably wasted knowledge as we came, and have left nearly as much behind us as we brought with us: but the road is yet rich with the fragments, and, before we fully lose sight of them, will repay us for the trouble of stopping to pick them up.

Were a man to be totally deprived of memory, he would be incapable of forming any just opinion; every thing about him would seem a chaos; he would have even his own history to ask from every one; and by not knowing how the world went in his absence, he would be at a loss to know how it *ought* to go on when he recovered, or rather, returned to it again. In like manner, though in a less degree, a too great inattention to past occurrences retards and bewilders our judgment in every thing; while, on the contrary, by comparing what is past with what is present,

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we frequently hit on the true character of both, and become wise with very little trouble. It is a kind of countermarch, by which we get into the rear of time, and mark the movements and meaning of things as we make our return. There are certain circumstances, which, at the time of their happening, are kind of riddles, and as every riddle is to be followed by its answer, so those kind of circumstances will be followed by their events, and those events are always the true solution. A considerable space of time may lapse between, and unless we continue our observations from the one to the other, the harmony of them will pass away unnoticed: but the misfortune is, that partly from the pressing necessity of some instant things, and partly from the impatience of our own tempers, we are frequently in such a hurry to make out the meaning of every thing as fast as it happens, that we thereby never truly understand it; and not only start new difficulties to ourselves by so doing, but, as it were, embarrass Providence in her good designs.

I have been civil in stating this fault on a large scale, for, as it now stands, it does not appear to be levelled against any particular set of men; but were it to be refined a little further, it might afterwards be applied to the tories with a degree of striking propriety: those men have been remarkable for drawing sudden conclusions from single facts. The least apparent mishap on our side, or the least seeming advantage on the part of the enemy, have determined with them the fate of a whole campaign. By this hasty judgment they have converted a retreat into a defeat; mistook generalship for error; while every little advantage purposely given the enemy, either to weaken their strength by dividing it, embarrass their councils by multiplying their objects, or to secure a greater post by the surrender of a less, has been instantly magnified into a conquest. Thus, by quartering ill policy upon ill principles, they have frequently promoted the cause they designed to injure, and injured that which they intended to promote.

It is probable the campaign may open before this number comes from the press. The enemy have long lain idle and amused themselves with carrying on the war by proclamations only. While they continue their delay our strength increases, and were they to move to action now, it is a circumstantial proof that they have no reinforce-

it coming; wherefore, in either case, the comparative antage will be ours. Like a wounded, disabled whale, y want only time and room to die in; and though in the ny of their exit, it may be unsafe to live within the ping of their tail, yet every hour shortens their date l lessens their power of mischief. If any thing happens ile this number is in the press, it will afford me a subject the last pages of it. At present I am tired of waiting; l as neither the enemy, nor the state of politics, have *yet* duced any thing new, I am thereby left in the field of eral matter, undirected by any striking or particular ect. This Crisis, therefore, will be made up rather of iety than novelty, and consist more of things useful than igs wonderful.

The success of the cause, the union of the people, and means of supporting and securing both, are points which not be too much attended to. He who doubts of the ner is a desponding coward, and he who wilfully dis-os the latter is a traitor. Their characters are easily d, and under these short descriptions I leave them for present.

One of the greatest degrees of sentimental union which erica ever knew, was in denying the right of the British liament "*to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever.*" The laration is in its form an almighty one, and is the lofti-stretch of arbitrary power that ever one set of men, or country claimed over another. Taxation was nothing e than the putting the declared right into practice; and failing, recourse was had to arms, as a means to estab-both the right *and* the practice, or to answer a worse pose, which will be mentioned in the course of this num-

And in order to repay themselves the expense of an y, and to profit by their own injustice, the colonies were another law, declared to be in a state of actual rebel-, and of consequence all property therein would fall to conquerors.

The colonies on their part, *first*, denied the right; *second-*hey suspended the use of taxable articles, and petition-against the practice of taxation: and these failing, they *ly*, defended their property by force, as soon as it was ibly invaded, and in answer to the declaration of rebel-and non-protection, published their declaration of in-endence and right of self-protection.

These, in a few words are the different stages of t
rel; and the parts are so intimately and necessarily
ted with each other as to admit of no separation.
son, to use a trite phrase, must be a whig or a tor
lump. His feelings as a man, may be wounded; h
ty as a Christian may be moved; but his politica
ples must go through all the cases on one side or th
He cannot be a whig in *this* stage, and a tory in *th*
says he is against the united independence of the c
he is to all intents and purposes against her in all t
because *this last* comprehends the whole. And he
as well say, that Britain was right in declaring us
right in taxing us; and right in declaring her "*rig*
the colonies in all cases whatsoever." It signifies nothi
neutral ground, of his own creating, he may skulk
shelter, for the quarrel in no stage of it hath affor
such ground; and either we or Britain are absolut
or absolutely wrong through the whole.

Britain, like a gamester nearly ruined, hath no
her losses into one bet, and is playing a desperate
the total. If she wins it, she wins from *me* my l
wins the continent as the forfeited property of rel
right of taxing those that are left as reduced subje
the power of binding them slaves: and the single d
determines this unparalleled event is, whether we
our independence or she overturn it. This is c
the point at once. Here is the touch-stone to try
He that is not a supporter of the independent states of A
the same degree that his religious and political princip
suffer him to support the government of any other co
which he called himself a subject, is, in the American se
word, A TORY; *and the instant that he endeavors to*
toryism into practice, he becomes A TRAITOR. The first c
be detected by a general test, and the law hath
provided for the latter.

It is unnatural and impolitic to admit men wh
root up our independence to have any share in our
tion, either as electors or representatives; because
port of our independence rests in a great measur
vigor and purity of our public bodies. Would Brit
in time of peace, much less in war, suffer an electi
carried by men who professed themselves to be not
jects, or allow such to sit in parliament? Certainly

But there are a certain species of tories with whom conscience or principle hath nothing to do, and who are so from avarice only. Some of the first fortunes on the continent, on the part of the whigs, are staked on the issue of our present measures. And shall disaffection only be rewarded with security? Can any thing be a greater inducement to a miserly man, than the hope of making his mammon safe? And though the scheme be fraught with every character of folly, yet, so long as he supposes, that by doing nothing materially criminal against America on one part, and by expressing his private disapprobation against dependence, as palliative with the enemy on the other part, he stands in a safe line between both; while, I say, this ground be suffered to remain, craft and the spirit of avarice will point it out, and men will not be wanting to fill this most contemptible of all characters.

These men, ashamed to own the sordid cause from whence their disaffection springs, add thereby meanness to meanness, by endeavoring to shelter themselves under the mask of hypocrisy; that is, they had rather be thought to be tories from *some kind of principle*, than tories by having *principle at all*. But till such time as they can show some real reason, natural, political, or conscientious, on which their objections to independence are founded, we are not obliged to give them credit for being tories of the first stamp, but must set them down as tories of the last.

In the second number of the Crisis I endeavored to show the impossibility of the enemy's making any conquest of America, that nothing was wanting on our part but patience and perseverance, and that, with these virtues, our success, as far as human speculation could discern, seemed as certain as fate. But as there are many among us, who, influenced by others, have regularly gone back from the principles they once held, in proportion as we have gone forward; and as it is the unfortunate lot of many a good man to live within the neighborhood of disaffected ones; I shall therefore, for the sake of confirming the one and recovering the other, endeavor, in the space of a page or two, to go over some of the leading principles in support of independence. It is a much pleasanter task to prevent vice than to punish it; and however our tempers may be gratified by resentment, or our national expenses eased by forfeited estates, harmony and friendship is nevertheless the happiest condition a country can be blest with.

The principal arguments in support of independence may be comprehended under the four following heads.

1st, The natural right of the continent to independence.

2d, Her interest in being independent.

3d, The necessity,—and

4th. The moral advantages arising therefrom.

1st, The natural right of the continent to independence, is a point which never yet was called in question. It will not even admit of a debate. To deny such a right, would be a kind of atheism against nature: and the best answer to such an objection would be, "*The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.*"

2d, The interest of the continent in being independent is a point as clearly right as the former. America, by her own internal industry, and unknown to all the powers of Europe, was at the beginning of the dispute, arrived at a pitch of greatness, trade and population, beyond which it was the interest of Britain not to suffer her to pass, lest she should grow too powerful to be kept subordinate. She began to view this country with the same uneasy, malicious eye, with which a covetous guardian would view his ward whose estate he had been enriching himself by for twenty years, and saw him just arriving at manhood. And America owes no more to Britain for her present maturity, than the ward would to the guardian for being twenty-one years of age. That America hath flourished *at the time* she was under the government of Britain, is true; but there is every natural reason to believe, that had she been an independent country from the first settlement thereof, uncontrolled by any foreign power, free to make her own laws, regulate and encourage her own commerce, she had by this time been of much greater worth than now. The case is simply this: the first settlers in the different colonies were left to shift for themselves, unnoticed and unsupported by any European government; but as the tyranny and persecution of the old world daily drove numbers to the new, and as, by the favor of heaven on their industry and perseverance, they grew into importance, so, in a like degree, they became an object of profit to the greedy eyes of Europe. It was impossible in this state of infancy, however thriving and promising, that they could resist the power of any armed invader that should seek to bring them under his authority. In this situation Britain thought it worth her while to claim them, and the continent received and

acknowledged the claimer. It was, in reality, of no very great importance who was her master, seeing, that from the force and ambition of the different powers of Europe, she must, till she acquired strength enough to assert her own right, acknowledge some one. As well, perhaps, Britain as another; and it might have been as well to have been under the states of Holland as any. The same hopes of engrossing and profiting by her trade, by not oppressing it too much, would have operated alike with any master, and produced to the colonies the same effects. The clamor of protection, likewise, was all a farce; because, in order to make *that* protection necessary, she must first, by her own quarrels create us enemies. Hard terms indeed!

To know whether it be the interest of the continent to be independent, we need only ask this easy, simple question: Is it the interest of a man to be a boy all his life? The answer to one will be the answer to both. America hath been one continued scene of legislative contention from the first king's representative to the last; and this was unavoidably founded in the natural opposition of interest between the old country and the new. A governor sent from England, or receiving his authority therefrom, ought never to have been considered in any other light than that of a genteel commissioned spy, whose private business was information, and his public business a kind of civilized oppression. In the first of these characters he was to watch the tempers, sentiments and disposition of the people, the growth of trade, and the increase of private fortunes; and in the latter, to suppress all such acts of the assemblies, however beneficial to the people, which did not directly or indirectly throw some increase of power or profit into the hands of those that sent him.

America, till now, could never be called a *free country*, because her legislation depended on the will of a man three thousand miles distant, whose interest was in opposition to ours, and who, by a single "no," could forbid what law he pleased.

The freedom of trade, likewise, is, to a trading country, an article of such importance, that the principal source of wealth depends upon it; and it is impossible that any country can flourish, as it otherwise might do, whose commerce is engrossed, cramped and fettered by the laws and mandates of another—yet these evils, and more than I can here enumerate, the continent has suffered by being under the

government of England. By an independence we clear the whole at once—put an end to the business of unanswered petitions and fruitless remonstrances—exchange Britain for Europe—shake hands with the world—live at peace with the world—and trade to any market where we can buy and sell.

3d, The necessity, likewise, of being independent, even before it was declared, became so evident and important, that the continent ran the risk of being ruined every day that she delayed it. There was reason to believe that Britain would endeavor to make an European matter of it, and rather than lose the whole, would dismember it like Poland, and dispose of her several claims to the highest bidder. Genoa, failing in her attempts to reduce Corsica, made a sale of it to the French, and such traffics have been common in the old world. We had at that time no ambassador in any part of Europe, to counteract her negociations, and by that means she had the range of every foreign court uncontradicted on our part. We even knew nothing of the treaty for the Hessians till it was concluded, and the troops ready to embark. Had we been independent before, we had probably prevented her obtaining them. We had no credit abroad, because of our rebellious dependancy. Our ships could claim no protection in foreign ports, because we afforded them no justifiable reason for granting it to us. The calling ourselves subjects, and at the same time fighting against the power which we acknowledged, was a dangerous precedent to all Europe. If the grievances justified the taking up arms, they justified our separation; if they did not justify our separation, neither could they justify our taking up arms. All Europe was interested in reducing us as rebels, and all Europe (or the greatest part at least) is interested in supporting us as independent states. At home our condition was still worse; our currency had no foundation, and the fall of it would have ruined whig and tory alike. We had no other law than a kind of moderated passion; no other civil power than an honest mob; and no other protection than the temporary attachment of one man to another. Had independence been delayed a few months longer, this continent would have been plunged into irrecoverable confusion: some violent for it, some against it, till in the general cabal the rich would have been ruined, and the poor destroyed. It is to independence that every tory owes the present safety

which he lives in; for by *that*, and *that only*, we emerged from a state of dangerous suspense, and became a regular people.

The necessity, likewise, of being independent, had there been no rupture between Britain and America, would in a little time have brought one on. The increasing importance of commerce, the weight and perplexity of legislation, and the entangled state of European politics, would daily have shown to the continent the impossibility of continuing subordinate; for, after the coolest reflections on the matter, *this must* be allowed, that Britain was too jealous of America to govern it justly; too ignorant of it to govern it well; and too far distant from it to govern it at all.

4th. But, what weigh most with all men of serious reflection are the *moral advantages* arising from independence: war and desolation have become the trade of the old world; and America neither could, nor can be under the government of Britain without becoming a sharer of her guilt, and a partner in all the dismal commerce of death. The spirit of duelling, extended on a national scale, is a proper character for European wars. They have seldom any other motive than pride, or any other object than fame. The conquerors and the conquered are generally ruined alike, and the chief difference at last is, that the one marches home with his honors, and the other without them. 'Tis the natural temper of the English to fight for a feather, if they suppose *that feather* to be an affront; and America, without the right of asking why, must have abetted in every quarrel and abided by its fate. It is a shocking situation to live in, that one country must be brought into all the wars of another, whether the measure be right or wrong, or whether she will or not; yet this, in the fullest extent, was, and ever would be, the unavoidable consequence of the connexion. Surely the Quakers forgot their own principles, when in their late Testimony they called *this connexion* with these military and miserable appendages hanging to it—"*the happy constitution.*"

Britain, for centuries past, has been nearly fifty years out of every hundred at war with some power or other. It certainly ought to be a conscientious as well as political consideration with America, not to dip her hands in the bloody work of Europe. Our situation affords us a retreat from their cabals, and the present happy union of the states bids fair for extirpating the future use of arms from one

quarter of the world; yet such have been the irreligious politics of the present leaders of the Quakers, that, for the sake of they scarce know what, they would cut off every hope of such a blessing by tying this continent to Britain, like Hector to the chariot wheel of Achilles, to be dragged through all the miseries of endless European wars.

The connexion, viewed from this ground, is distressing to every man who has the feelings of humanity. By having Britain for our master, we became enemies to the greatest part of Europe, and they to us; and the consequence was war inevitable. By being our own masters, independent of any foreign one, we have Europe for our friends, and the prospect of an endless peace among ourselves. Those who were advocates for the British government over these colonies, were obliged to limit both their arguments and their ideas to the period of an European peace only: the moment Britain became plunged in war, every supposed convenience to us vanished and all we could hope for was *not to be ruined.* Could this be a desirable condition for a young country to be in?

Had the French pursued their fortune immediately after the defeat of Braddock last war, this city and province had then experienced the woful calamities of being a British subject. A scene of the same kind might happen again; for America, considered as a subject to the crown of Britain, would ever have been the seat of war and the bone of contention between the two powers.

On the whole, if the future expulsion of arms from one quarter of the world would be a desirable object to a peaceable man;—if the freedom of trade to every part of it can engage the attention of a man of business;—if the support or fall of millions of currency can affect our interests;—if the entire possession of estates, by cutting off the lordly claims of Britain over the soil, deserves the regard of landed property; and if the right of making our own laws, uncontrolled by royal or ministerial spies or mandates, be worthy our care as freemen;—then are all men interested in the support of independence; and may he that supports it not, be driven from the blessing, and live unpitied beneath the servile sufferings of scandalous subjection!

We have been amused with the tales of ancient wonders; we have read, and wept over, the histories of other nations; applauded, censured or pitied, as their cases

affected us. The fortitude and patience of the sufferers—the justness of their cause—the weight of their oppressions and oppressors—the object to be saved or lost—with all the consequences of a defeat or a conquest—have, in the hour of sympathy, bewitched our hearts and chained it to their fate: but where is the power that ever made war upon petitioners? Or where is the war on which a world was staked till now?

We may not, perhaps, be wise enough to make all the advantages we ought of our independence; but they are, nevertheless, marked and presented to us with every character of *great* and *good*, and worthy the hand of him who sent them. I look through the present trouble to a time of tranquillity, when we shall have it in our power to set an example of peace to all the world. Were the Quakers really impressed and influenced by the quiet principles they profess to hold, they would, however they might disapprove the means, be the first of all men to approve of *independence*, because, by separating ourselves from the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, it affords an opportunity, never given to man before, of carrying their favorite principle of peace into general practice, by establishing governments that shall hereafter exist without wars. O! ye fallen, cringing, priest and Pemberton-ridden people! What more can we say of ye than that a religious Quaker is a valuable character, and a political Quaker a real Jesuit.

Having thus gone over some of the principal points in support of independence, I must now request the reader to return back with me to the period when it first began to be a public doctrine, and to examine the progress it has made among the various classes of men. The era I mean to begin at, is the breaking out of hostilities, April 19th, 1775. Until this event happened, the continent seemed to view the dispute as a kind of law-suit for a matter of right, litigating between the old country and the new; and she felt the same kind and degree of horror, as if she had seen an oppressive plaintiff, at the head of a band of ruffians, enter the court, while the cause was before it, and put the judge, the jury, the defendant and his council, to the sword. Perhaps a more heart-felt convulsion never reached a country with the same degree of power and rapidity before, and never may again. Pity for the sufferers, mixed with indignation at the violence, and heightened with

apprehensions of undergoing the same fate, made the affair of Lexington the affair of the continent. Every part of it felt the shock, and all vibrated together. A general promotion of sentiment took place: those who had drank deeply into whiggish principles, that is, the right and necessity not only of opposing, but wholly setting aside the power of the crown as soon as it became practically dangerous (for in theory it was always so) stepped into the first stage of independence; while another class of whigs, equally sound in principle, but not so sanguine in enterprise, attached themselves the stronger to the cause, and fell close in with the rear of the former; their partition was a mere point. Numbers of the moderate men, whose chief fault, *at that time*, arose from their entertaining a better opinion of Britain than she deserved, convinced now of their mistake, gave her up and publicly declared themselves good whigs. While the tories, seeing it was no longer a laughing matter, either sunk into silent obscurity, or contented themselves with coming forth and abusing general Gage: not a single advocate appeared to justify the action of that day; it seemed to appear to every one with the same magnitude, struck every one with the same force, and created in every one the same abhorrence. From this period we may date the growth of independence.

If the many circumstances, which happened at this memorable time, be taken in one view, and compared with each other, they will justify a conclusion which seems not to have been attended to, I mean a fixed design in the king and ministry of driving America into arms, in order that they might be furnished with a pretence for seizing the whole continent, as the immediate property of the crown. A noble plunder for hungry courtiers!

It ought to be remembered, that the first petition from the congress was at this time unanswered on the part of the British king. That the motion, called lord North's motion, of the 20th of February, 1775, arrived in America the latter end of March. This motion was to be laid by the several governors, then in being, before the assembly of each province; and the first assembly before which it was laid, was the assembly of Pennsylvania in *May* following. This being a just state of the case, I then ask, why were hostilities commenced between the time of passing the resolve in the house of commons, of the 20th of February, and the time of the assemblies meeting to deliber-

até upon it? Degrading and infamous as that motion was, there is, nevertheless, reason to believe that the king and his adherents were afraid the colonies would agree to it, and lest they should, took effectual care they should not, by provoking them with hostilities in the interim. They had not the least doubt at that time of conquering America at one blow; and what they expected to get by a conquest being infinitely greater than any thing they could hope to get either by taxation or accommodation, they seemed determined to prevent even the possibility of hearing each other, lest America should disappoint their greedy hopes of the whole, by listening even to their own terms. On the one hand they refused to hear the petition of the continent, and on the other hand took effectual care the continent should not hear them.

That the motion of the 20th of February and the orders for commencing hostilities were both concerted by the same person or persons, and not the latter by general Gage, as was falsely imagined at first, is evident from an extract of a letter of his to the administration, read among other papers in the house of commons; in which he informs his masters, "*That though their idea of his disarming certain counties was a right one, yet it required him to be master of the country, in order to enable him to execute it.*" This was prior to the commencement of hostilities, and consequently before the motion of the 20th of February could be deliberated on by the several assemblies.

Perhaps it may be asked, why was the motion passed, if there was at the same time a plan to aggravate the Americans not to listen to it? Lord North assigned one reason himself, which was *a hope of dividing them.* This was publicly tempting them to reject it; that if, in case the injury of arms should fail of provoking them sufficiently, the insult of such a declaration might fill it up. But by passing the motion and getting it afterwards rejected in America, it enabled them, in their wretched idea of politics, among other things, to hold up the colonies to foreign powers with every possible mark of disobedience and rebellion. They had applied to those powers not to supply the continent with arms, ammunition, &c. and it was necessary they should incense them against us, by assigning on their own part some seeming reputable reason why. By dividing, it had a tendency to weaken the states, and likewise to perplex the adherents of America in England. But the principal scheme, and

there are thousands and tens of thousands in America who wonder *now* that they should ever have thought otherwise; but the sin of that day was the sin of civility, yet it operated against our present good in the same manner that a civil opinion of the devil would against our future peace.

Independence was a doctrine scarce and rare even towards the conclusion of the year 1775: all our politics had been founded on the hope or expectation of making the matter up—a hope, which, though general on the side of America, had never entered the head or heart of the British court. Their hope was conquest and confiscation. Good heavens! what volumes of thanks does America owe to Britain? What infinite obligation to the tool that fills, with paradoxical vacancy, the throne! Nothing but the sharpest essence of villainy, compounded with the strongest distillation of folly, could have produced a menstruum that would have effected a separation. The congress in 1774, administered an abortive medicine to independence, by prohibiting the importation of goods, and the succeeding congress rendered the dose still more dangerous by continuing it. Had independence been a settled system with America, (as Britain has advanced,) she ought to have *doubled* her importation, and prohibited in some degree her exportation. And this single circumstance is sufficient to acquit America before any jury of nations, of having a continental plan of independence in view: a charge, which had it been true, would have been honorable, but is so grossly false, that either the amazing ignorance, or the wilful dishonesty of the British court, is effectually proved by it.

The second petition, like the first, produced no answer; it was scarcely acknowledged to have been received; the British court were too determined in their villainy even to act it artfully, and in their rage for conquest neglected the necessary subtleties for obtaining it. They might have divided, distracted and played a thousand tricks with us, had they been as cunning as they were cruel.

This last indignity gave a new spring to independence. Those who knew the savage obstinacy of the king and the jobbing, gambling spirit of the court, predicted the fate of the petition, as soon as it was sent from America; for the men being known, their measures were easily foreseen. As politicians we ought not so much to ground our hope on the reasonableness of the thing we ask, as on the reasonableness of the person of whom we ask it: who would expect

discretion from a fool, candor from a tyrant, or justice from a villain?

As every prospect of accommodation seemed now to fail fast, men began to think seriously on the matter; and their reason being thus stripped of the false hope which had long encompassed it, became approachable by fair debate: yet still the bulk of the people hesitated; they startled at the novelty of independence, without once considering that our getting into arms at first was a more extraordinary novelty, and that all other nations had gone through the work of independence before us. They doubted likewise the ability of the continent to support it, without reflecting, that it required the same force to obtain an accommodation by arms as an independence. If the one was acquirable, the other was the same; because to accomplish either, it was necessary that our strength should be too great for Britain to subdue; and it was too unreasonable to suppose, that with the power of being masters, we should submit to be servants.* Their caution at this time, was exceedingly misplaced; for if they were able to defend their property and maintain their rights by arms, they consequently were able to defend and support their independence; and in proportion as these men saw the necessity and correctness of the measure, they honestly and openly declared and adopted it, and the part that they have acted since, has done them honor, and fully established their characters. Error in opinion has this peculiar advantage with it, that the foremost point of the contrary ground may at any time be reached by the sudden exertion of a thought; and it frequently happens in sentimental differences that some striking cir-

* In this state of political suspense the pamphlet Common Sense made its appearance, and the success it met with does not become me to mention. Dr. Franklin, Mr. Samuel and John Adams, were severally spoken of as the supposed author. I had not, at that time, the pleasure either of personally knowing or being known to the two last gentlemen. The favor of Dr. Franklin's friendship I possessed in England, and my introduction to this part of the world was through his patronage. I happened, when a school-boy, to pick up a pleasing natural history of Virginia, and my inclination from that day of seeing the western side of the Atlantic never left me. In October, 1775, Dr. Franklin proposed giving me such materials as were in his hands, towards completing a history of the present transactions, and seemed desirous of having the first volume out the next spring. I had then formed the outlines of Common Sense, and finished nearly the first part; and as I supposed the doctor's design in getting out a history, was to open the new year with a new system, I expected to surprise him with a production on that subject, much earlier than he thought of; and without informing him of what I was doing, got it ready for the press as fast as I conveniently could, and sent him the first pamphlet that was printed off.

cumstance, or some forcible reason, quickly conceived, will effect in an instant what neither argument nor example could produce in an age.

I find it impossible in the small compass I am limited to, to trace out the progress which independence has made on the minds of the different classes of men, and the several reasons by which they were moved. With some, it was a passionate abhorrence against the king of England and his ministry, as a set of savages and brutes; and these men, governed by the agony of a wounded mind, were for trusting every thing to hope and heaven, and bidding defiance at once. With others, it was a growing conviction that the scheme of the British court was to create, ferment and drive on a quarrel for the sake of confiscated plunder: men of this class ripened into independence in proportion as the evidence increased. While a third class, conceived it was the true interest of America, internally and externally, to be her own master, and gave their support to independence, step by step, as they saw her abilities to maintain it enlarge. With many, it was a compound of all these reasons; while those who were too callous to be reached by either, remained, and still remain tories.

The *legal necessity* of being independent, with several collateral reasons, is pointed out in an elegant, masterly manner, in a charge to the grand jury for the district of Charleston, by the Hon. William Henry Drayton, chief justice of South-Carolina. This performance and the address of the convention of New-York, are pieces, in my humble opinion, of the first rank in America.

The principal causes why independence has not been so universally supported as it ought, are *fear* and *indolence*, and the causes why it has been opposed, are, *avarice*, *downright villainy*, and *lust of personal power*. There is not such a being in America, as a tory from conscience; some secret defect or other is interwoven in the character of all those, be they men or women, who can look with patience on the brutality, luxury, and debauchery of the British court, and the violations of their army here. A woman's virtue must sit very lightly on her who can even hint a favorable sentiment in their behalf. It is remarkable that the whole race of prostitutes in New-York were tories; and the schemes for supporting the tory cause, in this city, for which several are now in jail, and one hanged, were

concerted and carried on in common bawdy-houses, assisted by those who kept them.

The connexion between vice and meanness is a fit subject for satire, but when the satire is a fact, it cuts with the irresistible power of a diamond. If a Quaker, in defence of his just rights, his property and the chastity of his house takes up a musket, he is expelled the meeting; but the present king of England, who seduced and took into keeping a sister of their society, is reverenced and supported with repeated Testimonies, while the friendly noodle from whom she was taken (and who is now in this city) continues a drudge in the service of his rival, as if proud of being cuckolded by a creature called a king.

Our support and success depend on such a variety of men and circumstances, that every one, who does but wish well, is of some use: there are men who have a strange aversion to arms, yet have hearts to risk every shilling in the cause, or in support of those who have better talents for defending it. Nature, in the arrangement of mankind, has fitted some for every service in life: were all soldiers, all would starve and go naked, and were none soldiers, all would be slaves. As *disaffection* to independence is the badge of a tory, so *affection* to it is the mark of a whig; and the different services of the whigs, down from those who nobly contribute every thing, to those who have nothing to render but their wishes, tend all to the same centre, though with different degrees of merit and ability. The larger we make the circle, the more we shall harmonize, and the stronger we shall be. All we want to shut out, is disaffection, and, *that excluded*, we must accept from each other such duties as we are best fitted to bestow. A narrow system of politics, like a narrow system of religion, is calculated only to sour the temper, and be at variance with mankind.

All we want to know in America is simply this, who is for independence, and who is not? Those who are for it, will support it, and the remainder will undoubtedly see the reasonableness of paying the charges; while those who oppose or seek to betray it, must expect the more rigid fate of the jail and the gibbet. There is a bastard kind of generosity, which being extended to all men, is as fatal to society, on one hand, as the want of true generosity is on the other. A lax manner of administering justice, falsely termed moderation, has a tendency both to dispirit public virtue,

and promote the growth of public evils. Had the late committee of safety taken cognizance of the last Testimony of the Quakers, and proceeded against such delinquents as were concerned therein, they had, probably prevented the treasonable plans which have been concerted since. When one villain is suffered to escape, it encourages another to proceed, either from a hope of escaping likewise, or an apprehension that we dare not punish. It has been a matter of general surprise, that no notice was taken of the incendiary publication of the Quakers, of the 20th of November last: a publication evidently intended to promote sedition and treason, and encourage the enemy, who were then within a day's march of this city, to proceed on and possess it. I here present the reader with a memorial, which was laid before the board of safety a few days after the Testimony appeared. Not a member of that board, that I conversed with, but expressed the highest detestation of the perverted principles and conduct of the Quaker junto, and a wish that the board would take the matter up; notwithstanding which, it was suffered to pass away unnoticed, to the encouragement of new acts of treason, the general danger of the cause, and the disgrace of the state.

To the honorable the council of safety of the state of Pennsylvania.

At a meeting of a reputable number of the inhabitants of the city of Philadelphia, impressed with a proper sense of the justice of the cause which this continent is engaged in, and animated with a generous fervor for supporting the same, it was resolved, that the following be laid before the board of safety:

"We profess liberality of sentiment to all men; with this distinction *only*, that those who do not deserve it, would become wise and *seek* to deserve it. We hold the pure doctrines of universal liberty of conscience, and conceive it our duty to endeavor to secure that sacred right to others, as well as to defend it for ourselves; for we undertake not to judge of the religious rectitude of tenets, but leave the whole matter to Him who made us.

"We persecute no man, neither will we abet in the persecution of any man for religion's sake; our common relation to others being that of fellow-citizens and fellow-subjects of one single community; and in this line of connexion we hold out the right hand of fellowship to all men.

But we should conceive ourselves to be unworthy members of the *free and independent states of America*, were we unconcernedly to see or to suffer any treasonable wound, public or private, directly or indirectly, to be given against the peace and safety of the same. We inquire not into the rank of the offenders, nor into their religious persuasion; we have no business with either, our part being only to find them out, and exhibit them to justice.

"A printed paper, dated the 20th of November, and signed '*John Pemberton*,' whom we suppose to be an inhabitant of this city, has lately been dispersed abroad, a copy of which accompanies this. Had the framers and publishers of that paper conceived it their duty, to exhort the youth, and others of their society, to a patient submission under the present trying visitations, and humbly to wait the event of heaven towards them, they had therein shown a Christian temper, and we had been silent; but the anger and political virulence with which their instructions are given, and the abuse with which they stigmatize all ranks of men, not thinking like themselves, leave no doubt on our minds from what spirit their publication proceeded: and it is disgraceful to the pure cause of truth, that men can dally with words of the most sacred import, and play them off as mechanically as if religion consisted only in contrivance. We know of no instance in which the Quakers have been compelled to bear arms, or to do any thing which might strain their conscience; wherefore their advice, 'to withstand and refuse to submit to the arbitrary instructions and ordinances of men,' appear to us a false alarm, and could only be treasonably calculated to gain favor with our enemies, when they were seemingly on the brink of invading this state, or, what is still worse, to weaken the hands of our defence, that their entrance into this city might be made practicable and easy.

"We disclaim all tumult and disorder in the punishment of offenders; and wish to be governed, not by temper but by reason, in the manner of treating them. We are sensible that our cause has suffered by the two following errors; first, by ill-judged lenity to traitorous persons in some cases; and secondly, by only a passionate treatment of them in others. For the future we disown both, and wish to be steady in our proceedings, and serious in our punishments.

"Every state in America has, by the repeated voice of its inhabitants, directed and authorised the continental

congress to publish a formal declaration of independence of, and separation from, the oppressive king and parliament of Great Britain; and we look on every man an enemy who does not in some line or other give his assistance towards supporting the same; at the same time we consider the offence to be heightened to a degree of unpardonable guilt, when such persons, under the show of religion, endeavor either by writing, speaking or otherwise, to subvert, overturn, or bring reproach upon the independence of this continent as declared by congress.

"The publishers of the paper, signed 'John Pemberton,' have called in a loud manner on their friends and connexions, 'to withstand and refuse' obedience to whatever 'instructions or ordinances' may be published, not warranted by (what they call) 'that happy constitution under which they and others long enjoyed tranquillity and peace.' If this be not treason, we know not what may properly be called by that name.

"To us it is a matter of surprise and astonishment, that men with the word '*peace, peace,*' continually on their lips should be so fond of living under, and supporting a government, and at the same time calling it '*happy,*' which is never better pleased than when at war—that hath filled India with carnage and famine, Africa with slavery, and tampered with Indians and negroes to cut the throats of the freemen of America. We conceive it a disgrace to this state, to harbor or wink at such palpable hypocrisy. But as we seek not to hurt the hair of any man's head, when we can make ourselves safe without, we wish such persons to restore peace to themselves and us, by removing themselves to some part of the king of Great Britain's dominions, as by that means they may live unmolested by us or we by them; for our fixed opinion is, that those who do not deserve a place among us, ought not to have one.

"We conclude, with requesting the council of safety to take into their consideration the paper signed '*John Pemberton;*' and if it shall appear to them to be of a dangerous tendency, or of a treasonable nature, that they would commit the signer, together with such other persons as they can discover were concerned therein, into custody, until such time as some mode of trial shall ascertain the full degree of their guilt and punishment; in the doing of which, we wish their judges, whoever they may be, to disregard the man, his connexions, interest, riches, poverty

or principles of religion, and to attend to the nature of his offence only."

The most cavilling sectarian cannot accuse the foregoing with containing the least ingredient of persecution. The free spirit on which the American cause is founded, disdains to mix with such an impurity, and leaves it a rubbish fit only for narrow and suspicious minds to grovel in. Suspicion and persecution are weeds of the same dunghill, and flourish together. Had the Quakers minded their religion and their business, they might have lived through this dispute in enviable ease, and none would have molested them. The common phrase with these people is, '*Our principles are peace.*' To which may be replied, *and your practices are the reverse;* for never did the conduct of men oppose their own doctrine more notoriously than the present race of the Quakers. They have artfully changed themselves into a different sort of people to what they used to be, and yet have the address to persuade each other that they are not altered; like antiquated virgins they see not the havoc deformity hath made upon them, but pleasantly mistaking wrinkles for dimples, conceive themselves yet lovely, and wonder at the stupid world for not admiring them.

Did no injury arise to the public by this apostacy of the Quakers from themselves, the public would have nothing to do with it; but as both the design and consequences are pointed against a cause in which the whole community are interested, it is therefore no longer a subject confined to the cognizance of the meeting only, but comes as a matter of criminality before either the authority of the particular state *in which* it is acted, or of the continent *against which* it operates. Every attempt now to support the authority of the king and parliament of Great Britain over America, is treason against *every* state; therefore it is impossible that any *one* can pardon or screen from punishment an offender against *all.*

But to proceed: while the infatuated tories of this and other states were last spring talking of commissioners, accommodation, making the matter up, and the Lord knows what stuff and nonsense, their *good* king and the ministry were glutting themselves with the revenge of reducing America to *unconditional submission*, and solacing each other with the certainty of conquering it in *one campaign.* The

following quotations are from the parliamentary register of the debates of the house of lords, March 5th, 1776.

"The Americans," says lord Talbot,* "have been obstinate, undutiful and ungovernable from the very beginning, from their first early and infant settlements; and I am every day more and more convinced that this people never will be brought back to their duty, and the subordinate relation they stand in to this country, till *reduced to unconditional, effectual submission; no concession on our part, no lenity, no endurance*, will have any other effect but that of increasing their insolence."

"The struggle," says lord Townsend,† "is now a struggle for power; the die is cast, and the *only point* which now remains to be determined, is, in what manner the war can be most effectually prosecuted and speedily finished, in order to procure that *unconditional submission*, which has been so ably stated by the noble earl with the white staff;" (meaning lord Talbot) "and I have no reason to doubt that the measures now pursuing will put an end to the war in the course of a *single campaign*. Should it linger longer, we shall then have reason to expect that some foreign power will interfere, and take advantage of our domestic troubles and civil distractions."

Lord Littleton. "My sentiments are pretty well known. I shall only observe now that lenient measures have had no other effect than to produce insult after insult; that the more we conceded, the higher America rose in her demands, and the more insolent she has grown. It is for this reason that I am now for the most effective and decisive measures; and am of opinion, that no alternative is left us, but to relinquish America for ever, or finally determine to compel her to acknowledge the legislative authority of this country; and it is the principle of an *unconditional submission*, I would be for maintaining."

Can words be more expressive than these. Surely the tories will believe the tory lords! The truth is, they *do believe them*, and know as fully as any whig on the continent knows, that the king and ministry never had the least design of an accommodation with America, but an absolute unconditional conquest. And the part which the tories were to act, was, by downright lying, to endeavor to put the

* Steward of the king's household.

† Formerly general Townsend at Quebec, and late lord-lieutenant of Ireland.

continent off its guard, and to divide and sow discontent in the minds of such whigs as they might gain an influence over. In short to keep up a distraction here, that the force sent from England might be able to conquer in "*one campaign.*" They and the ministry were, by a differnt game playing into each others hands. The cry of the tories in England was, "*No reconciliation, no accommodation,*" in order to obtain the greater military force; while those in America were crying nothing but "*reconciliation and accommodation,*" that the force sent might conquer with the less resistance.

But this "*single campaign,*" is over, and America not conquered. The whole work is yet to do, and the force much less to do it with. Their condition is both despicable and deplorable: out of cash—out of heart, and out of hope. A country furnished with arms and ammunition, as America now is, with three millions of inhabitants, and three thousand miles distant from the nearest enemy that can approach her, is able to look and laugh them in the face.

Howe appears to have two objects in view, either to go up the North river, or come to Philadelphia.

By going up the North river, he secures a retreat for his army through Canada, but the ships must return if they return at all, the same way they went; as our army would be in the rear, the safety of their passage down is a doubtful matter. By such a motion he shuts himself from all supplies from Europe, but through Canada, and exposes his army and navy to the danger of perishing. The idea of his cutting off the communication between the eastern and southern states, by means of the North river, is merely visionary. He cannot do it by his shipping; because no ship can lay long at anchor in any river within reach of the shore; a single gun would drive a first rate from such a station. This was fully proved last October, at forts Washington and Lee, where one gun only, on each side of the river, obliged two frigates to cut and be towed off in an hour's time. Neither can he cut it off by his army; because the several posts they must occupy, would divide them almost to nothing, and expose them to be picked up by ours like pebbles on a river's bank; but admitting that he could, where is the injury? Because, while his whole force is cantoned out, as sentries over the water, they will be very innocently employed, and the moment they march into the country, the communication opens.

The most probable object is Philadelphia, and the reasons are many. Howe's business is to conquer it, and in proportion as he finds himself unable to the task, he will employ his strength to distress women and weak minds, in order to accomplish through *their* fears what he cannot effect by his *own* force. His coming or attempting to come to Philadelphia is a circumstance that proves his weakness: for no general, that felt himself able to take the field and attack his antagonist, would think of bringing his army into a city in the summer time; and this mere shifting the scene from place to place, without effecting any thing, has feebleness and cowardice on the face of it, and holds him up in a contemptible light to all who can reason justly and firmly. By several informations from New-York, it appears that their army in general, both officers and men, have given up the expection of conquering America; their eye now is fixed upon the spoil. They suppose Philadelphia to be rich with stores, and as they think to get more by robbing a town than by attacking an army, their movement towards this city is probable. We are not now contending against an army of soldiers, but against a band of thieves, who had rather plunder than fight, and have no other hope of conquest than by cruelty.

They expect to get a mighty booty and strike another general panic by making a sudden movement and getting possession of this city; but unless they can march *out* as well as *in*, or get the entire command of the river, to remove off their plunder, they may probably be stopped with the stolen goods upon them. They have never yet succeeded wherever they have been opposed, but at fort Washington. At Charleston their defeat was effectual. At Ticonderoga they ran away. In every skirmish at Kingsbridge and the White Plains they were obliged to retreat, and the instant that our arms were turned upon them in the Jerseys, they turned likewise, and those that turned not were taken.

The necessity of always fitting our internal police to the circumstances of the times we live in, is something so strikingly obvious that no sufficient objection can be made against it. The safety of all societies depends upon it; and where this point is not attended to, the consequences will either be a general languor or a tumult. The encouragement and protection of the good subjects of any state, and the suppression and punishment of bad ones, are the principal objects for which all authority is instituted, and

the line in which it ought to operate. We have in this city a strange variety of men and characters, and the circumstances of the times require that they should be publicly known; it is not the number of tories that hurt us, so much as the not finding out who they are; men must now take one side or the other, and abide by the consequences: the Quakers, trusting to their short-sighted sagacity, have, most unluckily for them, made their declaration in their last Testimony, and we ought *now* to take them at their word. They have voluntarily read themselves out of the continental meeting, and cannot hope to be restored to it again, but by payment and penitence. Men whose political principles are founded on avarice, are beyond the reach of reason, and the only cure of toryism of this cast, is to tax it. A substantial good drawn from a real evil, is of the same benefit to society, as if drawn from a virtue; and where men have not public spirit to render themselves serviceable, it ought to be the study of government to draw the best use possible from their vices. When the governing passion of any man, or set of men, is once known, the method of managing them is easy: for even misers, whom no public virtue can impress, would become generous, could a heavy tax be laid upon covetousness.

The tories have endeavored to insure their property with the enemy, by forfeiting their reputation with us; from which may be justly inferred, that their governing passion is avarice. Make them as much afraid of losing on one side as on the other, and you stagger their toryism; make them more so, and you reclaim them; for their principle is to worship the power which they are most afraid of.

This method of considering men and things together, opens into a large field for speculation, and affords me an opportunity of offering some observations on the state of our currency, so as to make the support of it go hand in hand with the suppression of disaffection and the encouragement of public spirit.

The thing which first presents itself in inspecting the state of the currency, is, that we have too much of it, and that there is a necessity of reducing the quantity, in order to increase the value. Men are daily growing poor by the very means that they take to get rich; for in the same proportion that the prices of all goods on hand are raised, the value of all money laid by is reduced. A simple case will make this clear: let a man have 100*l.* in cash, and as

many goods on hand as will today sell for 20*l.* but not content with the present market price, he raises them to 40*l.* and by so doing, obliges others in their own defence, to raise cent. per cent. likewise; in this case it is evident that his hundred pounds laid by, is reduced fifty pounds in value; whereas, had the market lowered cent. per cent. his goods would have sold but for ten, but his hundred pounds would have risen in value to two hundred; because it would then purchase as many goods again, or support his family as long again as before. And strange as it may seem, he is one hundred and fifty pounds the poorer for raising his goods, to what he would have been had he lowered them; because the forty pounds which his goods sold for, is, by the general rise of the markets cent. per cent. rendered of no more value than the ten pounds would be had the market fallen in the same proportion; and consequently the whole difference of gain or loss is on the difference in value of the hundred pounds laid by, *viz.* from fifty to two hundred. This rage for raising goods is for several reasons much more the fault of the tories than the whigs; and yet the tories (to their shame and confusion ought they to be told of it) are by far the most noisy and discontented. The greatest part of the whigs, by being now either in the army or employed in some public service, are *buyers* only, and not *sellers*, and as this evil has its origin in trade, it cannot be charged on those who are out of it.

But the grievance has now become too general to be remedied by partial methods, and the only effectual cure is to reduce the quantity of money: with half the quantity we should be richer than we are now, because the value of it would be doubled, and consequently our attachment to it increased; for it is not the number of dollars that a man has, but how far they will go, that makes him either rich or poor.

These two points being admitted, *viz.* that the quantity of money is too great, and that the prices of goods can only be effectually reduced by reducing the quantity of the money, the next point to be considered is, the method how to reduce it.

The circumstances of the times, as before observed, require that the public characters of all men should *now* be fully understood, and the only general method of ascertaining it is by an oath or affirmation, renouncing all allegiance to the king of Great Britain, and to support the independency of the United States, as declared by congress.

Let, at the same time, a tax of ten, fifteen, or twenty per cent. per annum, to be collected quarterly, be levied on all property. These alternatives, by being perfectly voluntary, will take in all sorts of people. Here is the test; here is the tax. He who takes the former, conscientiously proves his affection to the cause, and binds himself to pay his quota by the best *services* in his power, and is thereby justly exempt from the latter; and those who choose the latter, pay their quota in money, to be excused from the former, or rather, it is the price paid to us for their supposed, though mistaken, insurance with the enemy.

But this is only a part of the advantage which would arise by knowing the different characters of men. The whigs stake every thing on the issue of their arms, while the tories, by their disaffection, are sapping and undermining their strength; and of consequence, the property of the whigs is the more exposed thereby; and whatever injury their estates may sustain by the movements of the enemy, must either be borne by themselves, who have done every thing which has *yet* been done, or by the tories, who have not only done nothing, but have, by their disaffection, invited the enemy on.

In the present crisis we ought to know square by square and house by house, who are in real allegiance with the United Independent States, and who are not. Let but the line be made clear and distinct, and all men will then know what they are to trust to. It would not only be good policy, but strict justice, to raise fifty or an hundred thousand pounds, or more, if it is necessary, out of the estates and property of the king of England's votaries, resident in Philadelphia, to be distributed, as a reward to those inhabitants of the city and state, who should turn out and repulse the enemy, should they attempt to march this way; and likewise, to bind the property of all such persons to make good the damages which that of the whigs might sustain. In the undistinguishable mode of conducting a war, we frequently make reprisals at sea, on the vessels of persons in England, who are friends to our cause, compared with the resident tories among us.

In every former publication of mine, from Common Sense down to the last Crisis, I have generally gone on the charitable supposition, that the tories were rather a mistaken than a criminal people, and have applied argument after argument, with all the candor and temper which I was capable of, in order to set every part of the case

clearly and fairly before them, and if possible to reclaim them from ruin to reason. I have done my duty by them and have now done with that doctrine, taking it for granted, that those who yet hold their disaffection, are, either a set of avaricious miscreants, who would sacrifice the continent to save themselves, or a banditti of hungry traitors, who are hoping for a division of the spoil. To which may be added, a list of crown or proprietary dependants, who, rather than go without a portion of power, would be content to share it with the devil. Of such men there is no hope; and their obedience will only be according to the danger set before them, and the power that is exercised over them.

A time will shortly arrive, in which, by ascertaining the characters of persons now, we shall be guarded against their mischiefs then; for in proportion as the enemy despair of conquest, they will be trying the arts of seduction and the force of fear by all the mischiefs which they can inflict. But in war we may be certain of these two things, *viz.* that cruelty in an enemy, and motions made with more than usual parade, are always signs of weakness. He that can conquer, finds his mind too free and pleasant to be brutish; and he that intends to conquer, never makes too much show of his strength.

We now know the enemy we have to do with. While drunk with the certainty of victory, they disdained to be civil; and in proportion as disappointment makes them sober, and their apprehensions of an European war alarm them, they will become cringing and artful; honest they cannot be. But our answer to them, in either condition they may be in, is short and full—"As free and independent states we are willing to make peace with you tomorrow, but we neither can hear nor reply in any other character."

If Britain cannot conquer us, it proves that she is neither able to govern nor protect us, and our particular situation now is such, that any connexion with her would be unwisely exchanging a half-defeated enemy for two powerful ones. Europe, by every appearance, is now on the eve, nay, on the morning twilight of a war, and any alliance with George the third, brings France and Spain upon our backs; a separation from him attaches them to our side; therefore, the only road to *peace*, *honor*, and commerce, is *Independence*.

Written this fourth year of the UNION, *which God preserve*.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, April 19, 1777.

THE CRISIS.

NO. IV.

THOSE who expect to reap the blessings of fre
must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it.
event of yesterday was one of those kind alarms wh
just sufficient to rouse us to duty, without being of
quence enough to depress our fortitude. It is not
of a few acres of ground, but a cause, that we are d
ing, and whether we defeat the enemy in one battle,
degrees, the consequence will be the same.

Look back at the events of last winter and the p
year, there you will find that the enemy's successes a
contributed to reduce them. What they have gai
ground, they paid so dearly for in numbers, that the
tories have in the end amounted to defeats. We ha
ways been masters at the last push, and always sh
while we do our duty. Howe has been once on the
of the Delaware, and from thence driven back wit
and disgrace: and why not be again driven fro
Schuylkill? His condition and ours are very diff
He has every body to fight, we have only his *one* ar
cope with, and which wastes away at every engage
we can not only reinforce, but can redouble our num
he is cut off from all supplies, and must sooner or lat
evitably fall into our hands.

Shall a band of ten or twelve thousand robbers, wh
this day fifteen hundred or two thousand men le
strength than they were yesterday, conquer Americ
subdue even a single state? The thing cannot be, unle
sit down and suffer them to do it. Another such a b
notwithstanding we lost the ground, would, by still re
ing the enemy, put them in a condition to be afterw
totally defeated.

Could our whole army have come up to the attack at one time, the consequences had probably been otherwise; but our having different parts of the Brandywine creek to guard, and the uncertainty which road to Philadelphia the enemy would attempt to take, naturally afforded them an opportunity of passing with their main body at a place where only a part of ours could be posted; for it must strike every thinking man with conviction, that it requires a much greater force to oppose an enemy in several places, than is sufficient to defeat him in any one place.

Men who are sincere in defending their freedom, will always feel concern at every circumstance which seems to make against them; it is the natural and honest consequence of all affectionate attachments, and the want of it is a vice. But the dejection lasts only for a moment; they soon rise out of it with additional vigor; the glow of hope, courage and fortitude, will, in a little time supply the place of every inferior passion and kindle the whole heart into heroism.

There is a mystery in the countenance of some causes, which we have not always present judgment enough to explain. It is distressing to see an enemy advancing into a country, but it is the only place in which we can beat them, and in which we have always beaten them, whenever they made the attempt. The nearer any disease approaches to a crisis, the nearer it is to a cure. Danger and deliverance make their advances together, and it is only the last push, in which one or the other takes the lead.

There are many men who will do their duty when it is not wanted; but a genuine public spirit always appears most when there is most occasion for it. Thank God! our army, though fatigued, is yet entire. The attack made by us yesterday, was under many disadvantages, naturally arising from the uncertainty of knowing which route the enemy would take; and from that circumstance, the whole of our force could not be brought up together time enough to engage all at once. Our strength is yet reserved; and it is evident that Howe does not think himself a gainer by the affair, otherwise he would this morning have moved down and attacked general Washington.

Gentlemen of the city and country, it is in your power, by a spirited improvement of the present circumstance, to turn it to a real advantage. Howe is now weaker than

before, and every shot will contribute to reduce him. You are more immediately interested than any other part of the continent; your all is at stake; it is not so with the general cause; you are devoted by the enemy to plunder and destruction: it is the encouragement which Howe, the chief of plunderers, has promised his army. Thus circumstanced, you may save yourselves by a manly resistance, but you can have no hope in any other conduct. I never yet knew our brave general, or any part of the army, officers or men, out of heart, and I have seen them in circumstances a thousand times more trying than the present. It is only those that are not in action, that feel languor and heaviness, and the best way to rub it off is to turn out, and make sure work of it.

Our army must undoubtedly feel fatigue, and want a reinforcement of rest, though not of valor. Our own interest and happiness call upon us to give them every support in our power, and make the burden of the day, on which the safety of this city depends, as light as possible. Remember, gentlemen, that we have forces both to the northward and southward of Philadelphia, and if the enemy be but stopped till those can arrive, this city will be saved, and the enemy finally routed. You have too much at stake to hesitate. You ought not to think an hour upon the matter, but to spring to action at once. Other states have been invaded, have likewise driven off the invaders. Now our time and turn is come, and perhaps the finishing stroke is reserved for us. When we look back on the dangers we have been saved from, and reflect on the success we have been blessed with, it would be sinful either to be idle or to despair.

I close this paper with a short address to general Howe. You, sir, are only lingering out the period that shall bring with it your defeat. You have yet scarce began upon the war, and the further you enter, the faster will your troubles thicken. What you now enjoy is only a respite from ruin; an invitation to destruction; something that will lead on to our deliverance at your expense. We know the cause which we are engaged in, and though a passionate fondness for it may make us grieve at every injury that threatens it, yet, when the moment of concern is over, the determination to duty returns. We are not moved by the gloomy smile of a worthless king, but by the ardent glow

enerous patriotism. We fight not to enslave, but to a country free, and to make room upon the earth for est men to live in. In such a cause we are sure that are right; and we leave to you the despairing reflec- of being the tool of a miserable tyrant.

COMMON SENSE.

ladelphia, Sept. 12, 1777.

THE CRISIS.

NO. V.

—

TO GENERAL SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

To argue with a man who has renounced the use and authority of reason, and whose philosophy consists in holding humanity in contempt, is like administering medicine to the dead, or endeavoring to convert an atheist by scripture. Enjoy, sir, your insensibility of feeling and reflecting. It is the prerogative of animals. And no man will envy you those honors, in which a savage only can be your rival and a bear your master.

As the generosity of this country rewarded your brother's services last war with an elegant monument in Westminster Abbey, it is consistent that she should bestow some mark of distinction upon you. You certainly deserve her notice, and a conspicuous place in the catalogue of extraordinary persons. Yet it would be a pity to pass you from the world in state, and consign you to magnificent oblivion among the tombs, without telling the future beholder why. Judas is as much known as John, yet history ascribes their fame to very different actions.

Sir William hath undoubtedly merited a monument: but of what kind, or with what inscription, where placed or how embellished, is a question that would puzzle all the heralds of St. James's in the profoundest mood of historical deliberation. We are at no loss, sir, to ascertain your real character, but somewhat perplexed how to perpetuate its identity, and preserve it uninjured from the transformations of time or mistake. A statuary may give a false expression to your bust, or decorate it with some equivocal emblems, by which you may happen to steal into reputation and impose upon the hereafter traditionary world.

Ill nature or ridicule may conspire, or a variety of accidents combine, to lessen, enlarge, or change Sir William's fame; and no doubt but he who has taken so much pains to be singular in his conduct, would choose to be just as singular in his exit, his monument and his epitaph.

The usual honors of the dead, to be sure, are not sufficiently sublime to escort a character like you to the republic of dust and ashes; for however men may differ in their ideas of grandeur or government here, the grave is nevertheless a perfect republic. Death is not the monarch of the dead, but of the dying. The moment he obtains a conquest he loses a subject, and, like the foolish king you serve, will, in the end, war himself out of all his dominions.

As a proper preliminary towards the arrangement of your funeral honors, we readily admit your new rank of *knighthood*. The title is perfectly in character, and is your own, more by merit than creation. There are knights of various orders, from the knight of the windmill to the knight of the post. The former is your patron for exploits, and the latter will assist you in settling your accounts. No honorary title could be more happily applied! The ingenuity is sublime! And your royal master hath discovered more genius in fitting you therewith, than in generating the most finished figure for a button, or descanting on the properties of a button-mould.

But how, sir, shall we dispose of you? The invention of a statuary is exhausted, and Sir William is yet unprovided with a monument. America is anxious to bestow her funeral favors upon you, and wishes to do it in a manner that shall distinguish you from all the deceased heroes of the last war. The *Egyptian method of embalming* is not known to the present age, and hieroglyhical pageantry hath outlived the science of decyphering it. Some other method, therefore, must be thought of to immortalize the new knight of the windmill and post. Sir William, thanks to his stars, is not oppressed with very delicate ideas. He has no ambition of being wrapped up and handed about in myrrh, aloes and cassia. Less expensive odors will suffice; and it fortunately happens, that the simple genius of America hath discovered the art of preserving bodies and embellishing them too with much greater frugality than the ancients. In a balmage, sir, of humble tar, you will

be as secure as Pharaoh, and in a hieroglyphic of feathers, rival in finery all the mummies of Egypt.

As you have already made your exit from the moral world, and by numberless acts both of passionate and deliberate injustice engraved an "*here lyeth*," on your deceased honor, it must be mere affectation in you to pretend concern at the humors or opinions of mankind respecting you. What remains of you may expire at any time. The sooner the better. For he who survives his reputation, lives out of spite to himself, like a man listening to his own reproach.

Thus entombed and ornamented, I leave you to the inspection of the curious, and return to the history of your yet surviving actions.—The character of Sir William hath undergone some extraordinary revolutions since his arrival in America. It is now fixed and known; and we have nothing to hope from your candor or to fear from your capacity. Indolence and inability have too large a share in your composition ever to suffer you to be any thing more than the hero of little villanies and unfinished adventures. That, which to some persons appeared moderation in you at first, was not produced by any real virtue of your own, but by a contrast of passions dividing and holding you in perpetual irresolution. One vice will frequently expel another without the least merit in the man; as powers in contrary directions reduce each other to rest.

It became you to have supported a dignified solemnity of character; to have shown a superior liberality of soul; to have won respect by an obstinate perseverance in maintaining order, and to have exhibited on all occasions, such an unchangeable graciousness of conduct, that while we beheld in you the resolution of an enemy, we might admire in you the sincerity of a man. You came to America under the high sounding titles of commander and commissioner; not only to suppress what you called rebellion, by arms, but to shame it out of countenance, by the excellence of your example. Instead of which, you have been the patron of low and vulgar frauds, the encourager of Indian cruelties; and have imported a cargo of vices blacker than those which you pretended to suppress.

Mankind are not universally agreed in their determination of right and wrong; but there are certain actions which the consent of all nations and individuals hath branded with the unchangeable name of *meanness*. In the list of

human vices we find some of such a refined constitution, that they cannot be carried into practice without seducing some virtue to their assistance; but *meanness* hath neither alliance nor apology. It is generated in the dust and sweepings of other vices, and is of such a hateful figure that all the rest conspire to disown it. Sir William, the commissioner of George the third, hath at last vouchsafed to give it rank and pedigree. He has placed the fugitive at the council board, and dubbed it companion of the order of knighthood.

The particular act of meanness which I allude to in this description, is forgery. You, sir, have abetted and patronised the forging and uttering counterfeit continental bills. In the same New-York newspapers in which your own proclamation under your master's authority was published, offering, or pretending to offer, pardon and protection to the inhabitants of these states, there were repeated advertisements of counterfeit money for sale, and persons who have come officially from you and under the sanction of your flag, have been taken up in attempting to put them off.

A conduct so basely mean in a public character is without precedent or pretence. Every nation on earth, whether friends or enemies, will unite in despising you. 'Tis an incendiary war upon society which nothing can excuse or palliate—An improvement upon beggarly villainy—and shows an inbred wretchedness of heart made up between the venomous malignity of a serpent and the spiteful imbecility of an inferior reptile.

The laws of any civilized country would condemn you to the gibbet without regard to your rank or titles, because it is an action foreign to the usage and custom of war; and should you fall into our hands, which pray God you may, it will be a doubtful matter whether we are to consider you as a military prisoner or a prisoner for felony.

Besides, it is exceedingly unwise and impolitic in you, or any persons in the English service, to promote, or even encourage, or wink at, the crime of forgery in any case whatever. Because, as the riches of England, as a nation, are chiefly in paper, and the far greater part of trade among individuals is carried on by the same medium, that is, by notes and drafts on one another, they, therefore, of all people in the world ought to endeavor to keep forgery out of sight, and, if possible not to revive the idea of it. It is

dangerous to make men familiar with a crime which they may afterwards practise to much greater advantage against those who first taught them. Several officers in the English army have made their exit at the gallows for forgery on their agents; for we all know, who know any thing of England, that there is not a more necessitous body of men, taking them generally, than what the English officers are. They contrive to make a show at the expense of the tailors, and appear clean at the charge of the washer-women.

England hath at this time nearly two hundred million pounds sterling of public money in paper, for which she hath no real property; beside a large circulation of bank notes, bank post bills, and promissory notes and drafts of private bankers, merchants and tradesmen. She hath the greatest quantity of paper currency and the least quantity of gold and silver of any nation in Europe; the real specie, which is about sixteen millions sterling, serves only as change in large sums, which are always made in paper, or for payment in small ones. Thus circumstanced, the nation is put to its wit's end, and obliged to be severe almost to criminality, to prevent the practice and growth of forgery. Scarcely a session passes at the Old Bailey, or an execution at Tyburn, but witnesseth this truth, yet you, sir, regardless of the policy which her necessity obliges her to adopt, have made your whole army intimate with the crime. And as all armies, at the conclusion of a war, are too apt to carry into practice the vices of the campaign, it will probably happen, that England will hereafter abound in forgeries, to which art, the practitioners were first initiated under your authority in America. You, sir, have the honor of adding a new vice to the military catalogue; and the reason, perhaps, why the invention was reserved for you is, because no general before was mean enough even to think of it.

That a man whose soul is absorbed in the low traffic of vulgar vice, is incapable of moving in any superior region, is clearly shown in you by the event of every campaign. Your military exploits have been without plan, object or decision. Can it be possible that you or your employers suppose that the possession of Philadelphia will be any ways equal to the expense or expectation of the nation which supports you? What advantages does England derive from any achievements of yours? To *her* it is perfectly indifferent what place you are in, so long as the

business of conquest is unperformed and the charge of maintaining you remains the same.

If the principal events of the three campaigns be attended to, the balance will appear against you at the close of each; but the last, in point of importance to us, hath exceeded the former two. It is pleasant to look back on dangers past, and equally as pleasant to meditate on present ones when the way out begins to appear. *That* period is now arrived, and the long doubtful winter of war is changing to the sweeter prospects of victory and joy. At the close of the campaign, in 1775, you were obliged to retreat from Boston. In the summer of 1776, you appeared with a numerous fleet and army in the harbor of New-York. By what miracle the continent was preserved in that season of danger is a subject of admiration! If instead of wasting your time against Long-Island, you had run up the North river, and landed any where above New-York, the consequence must have been, that either you would have compelled general Washington to fight you with very unequal numbers, or he must have suddenly evacuated the city with the loss of nearly all the stores of his army, or have surrendered for want of provisions; the situation of the place naturally producing one or the other of these events.

The preparations made to defend New-York were, nevertheless, wise and military; because your forces were then at sea, their numbers uncertain; storms, sickness, or a variety of accidents might have disabled their coming, or so diminished them on their passage, that those which survived would have been incapable of opening the campaign with any prospect of success; in which case, the defence would have been sufficient and the place preserved: for cities that have been raised from nothing with an infinitude of labor and expense, are not to be thrown away on the bare probability of their being taken. On these grounds the preparations made to maintain New-York were as judicious as the retreat afterwards. While you, in the interim, let slip the *very* opportunity which seemed to put conquest in your power.

Through the whole of that campaign you had nearly double the forces which general Washington immediately commanded. The principal plan, at that time on our part, was to wear away the season with as little loss as possible, and to raise the army for the next year. Long-Island,

New-York, forts Washington and Lee were not defended, after your superior force was known, under any expectation of their being finally maintained, but as a range of outworks, in the attacking of which, your time might be wasted, your numbers reduced, and your vanity amused by possessing them on our retreat. It was intended to have withdrawn the garrison from fort Washington after it had answered the former of those purposes, but the fate of that day put a prize into your hands without much honor to yourselves.

Your progress through the Jerseys was accidental; you had it not even in contemplation, or you would not have sent a principal part of your force to Rhode-Island beforehand. The utmost hope of America in the year 1776, reached no higher than that she might not *then* be conquered. She had no expectation of defeating you in that campaign. Even the most cowardly tory allowed, that, could she withstand the shock of *that* summer her independence would be past a doubt. You had *then* greatly the advantage of her. You were formidable. Your military knowledge was supposed to be complete. Your fleets and forces arrived without an accident. You had neither experience nor reinforcements to wait for. You had nothing to do but to begin, and your chance lay in the first vigorous onset.

America was young and unskilled. She was obliged to trust her defence to time and practice; and hath, by mere dint of perseverance, maintained her cause, and brought the enemy to a condition, in which, she is now capable of meeting him on any grounds.

It is remarkable that in the campaign of 1776, you gained no more, notwithstanding your great force, than what was given you by consent of evacuation, except fort Washington: while every advantage obtained by us was by fair and hard fighting. The defeat of Sir Peter Parker was complete. The conquest of the Hessians at Trenton, by the remains of a retreating army, which but a few days before you affected to despise, is an instance of their heroic perseverance very seldom to be met with. And the victory over the British troops at Princeton, by a harrassed and wearied party, who had been engaged the day before and marched all night without refreshment, is attended with such a scene of circumstances and superiority of generalship, as will ever give it a place in the first rank in the history of great actions.

When I look back on the gloomy days of last winter and see America suspended by a thread, I feel a triumph of joy at the recollection of her delivery, and a reverence for the characters which snatched her from destruction. To doubt *now* would be a species of infidelity, and to forget the instruments which saved us *then* would be ingratitude.

The close of that campaign left us with the spirit of conquerors. The northern districts were relieved by the retreat of general Carleton over the lakes. The army under your command were hunted back and had their bounds prescribed. The continent began to feel its military importance, and the winter passed pleasantly away in preparations for the next campaign.

However confident you might be on your first arrival, the result of the year 1776 gave you some idea of the difficulty, if not impossibility of conquest. To this reason I ascribe your delay in opening the campaign of 1777. The face of matters, on the close of the former year, gave you no encouragement to pursue a discretionary war as soon as the spring admitted the taking the field: for though conquest, in that case, would have given you a double portion of fame, yet the experiment was too hazardous. The ministry, had you failed, would have shifted the whole blame upon you, charged you with having acted without orders, and condemned at once both your plan and execution.

To avoid these misfortunes, which might have involved you and your money accounts in perplexity and suspicion you prudently waited the arrival of a plan of operations from England, which was that you should proceed for Philadelphia by the way of the Chesapeake, and that Burgoyne, after reducing Ticonderoga, should take his route by Albany, and, if necessary, join you.

The splendid laurels of the last campaign have flourished in the north. In that quarter America hath surprised the world, and laid the foundation of this year's glory. The conquest of Ticonderoga, (if it may be called a conquest) has, like all your other victories, led on to ruin. Even the provisions taken in that fortress (which by general Burgoyne's return was sufficient in bread and flour for nearly 5000 men for ten weeks, and in beef and pork for the same number of men for one month) served only to hasten his overthrow, by enabling him to proceed to Saratoga, the place of his destruction. A short review of the operations

of the last campaign will show the condition of affairs on both sides.

You have taken Ticonderoga and marched into Philadelphia. These are all the events which the year hath produced on your part. A trifling campaign indeed, compared with the expenses of England and the conquest of the continent. On the other side, a considerable part of your northern force has been routed by the New-York militia under general Herkemer. Fort Stanwix hath bravely survived a compounded attack of soldiers and savages, and the besiegers have fled. The battle of Bennington has put a thousand prisoners into our hands, with all their arms, stores, artillery and baggage. General Burgoyne, in two engagements, has been defeated; himself, his army, and all that were his and theirs are now ours. Ticonderoga and Independence are retaken, and not the shadow of an enemy remains in all the northern districts. At this instant we have upwards of eleven thousand prisoners, between sixty and seventy pieces of brass ordnance, besides small arms, tents, stores, &c.

In order to know the real value of those advantages, we must reverse the scene, and suppose general Gates and the force he commanded, to be at your mercy as prisoners, and general Burgoyne with his army of soldiers and savages to be already joined to you in Pennsylvania. So dismal a picture can scarcely be looked at. It hath all the tracings and colorings of horror and despair; and excites the most swelling emotions of gratitude, by exhibiting the miseries we are so graciously preserved from.

I admire the distribution of laurels around the continent. It is the earnest of future union. South-Carolina has had her day of suffering and of fame; and the other southern states have exerted themselves in proportion to the force that invaded or insulted them. Towards the close of the campaign in 1776, these middle states were called upon and did their duty nobly. They were witnesses to the almost expiring flame of human freedom. It was the close struggle of life and death. The line of invisible division; and on which, the unabated fortitude of a Washington prevailed, and saved the spark that has since blazed in the north with unrivalled lustre.

Let me ask, sir, what great exploits have you performed? Through all the variety of changes and opportunities which the war has produced, I know no one action of yours

that can be styled masterly. You have moved in and out, backward and forward, round and round, as if valor consisted in a military jig. The history and figure of your movements would be truly ridiculous could they be justly delineated. They resemble the labors of a puppy pursuing his tail; the end is still at the same distance, and all the turnings round must be done over again.

The first appearance of affairs at Ticonderoga wore such an unpromising aspect, that it was necessary, in July to detach a part of the forces to the support of that quarter, which were otherwise destined or intended to act against you, and this, perhaps, has been the means of postponing your downfall to another campaign. The destruction of one army at a time is work enough. We know, sir, what we are about, what we have to do, and how to do it.

Your progress from the Chesapeake, was marked by no capital stroke of policy or heroism. Your principle aim was to get general Washington between the Delaware and Schuylkill and between Philadelphia and your army. In that situation, with a river on each of his flanks, which united about five miles below the city, and your army above him, you could have intercepted his reinforcements and supplies, cut off all his communication with the country, and, if necessary, have despatched assistance to open a passage for general Burgoyne. This scheme was too visible to succeed: for had general Washington suffered you to command the open country above him, I think it a very reasonable conjecture that the conquest of Burgoyne would not have taken place, because you could, in that case, have relieved him. It was therefore necessary, while that important victory was in suspense, to trepan *you* into a situation in which you could only be on the defensive, without the power of affording him assistance. The manœuvre had its effect and Burgoyne was conquered.

There has been something unmilitary and passive in you from the time of your passing the Schuylkill and getting possession of Philadelphia to the close of the campaign. You mistook a trap for a conquest, the probability of which had been made known to Europe, and the edge of your triumph taken off by our own information long before.

Having got you into this situation, a scheme for a general attack upon you at Germantown was carried into execution on the 4th of October, and though the success was not equal to the excellence of the plan, yet the attempting

it proved the genius of America to be on the rise, and her power approaching to superiority. The obscurity of the morning was your best friend, for a fog is always favorable to a hunted enemy. Some weeks after this you likewise planned an attack on general Washington, while at Whitemarsh. You marched out with infinite parade, but on finding him preparing to attack you next morning, you prudently turned about and retreated to Philadelphia with all the precipitation of a man conquered in imagination.

Immediately after the battle of Germantown, the probability of Burgoyne's defeat gave a new policy to affairs in Pennsylvania, and it was judged most consistent with the general safety of America to wait the issue of the northern campaign. Slow and sure is sound work. The news of that victory arrived in our camp on the 18th of October, and no sooner did the shout of joy and the report of the thirteen cannon reach your ears, than you resolved upon a retreat, and the next day, that is, on the 19th, you withdrew your drooping army into Philadelphia. This movement was evidently dictated by fear; and carried with it a positive confession that you dreaded a second attack. It was hiding yourself among women and children, and sleeping away the choicest part of a campaign in expensive inactivity. An army in a city can never be a conquering army. The situation admits only of defence. It is mere shelter; and every military power in Europe will conclude you to be eventually defeated.

The time when you made this retreat was the very time you ought to have fought a battle, in order to put yourself in a condition of recovering in Pennsylvania what you had lost at Saratoga. And the reason why you did not, must be either prudence or cowardice; the former supposes your inability, and the latter needs no explanation. I draw no conclusions, sir, but such as are naturally deduced from known and visible facts, and such as will always have a being while the facts which produced them remain unaltered.

After this retreat a new difficulty arose which exhibited the power of Britain in a very contemptible light; which was the attack and defence of Mud-Island. For several weeks did that little unfinished fortress stand out against all the attempts of admiral and general Howe. It was the fable of Bender realized on the Delaware. Scheme after scheme, and force upon force were tried and defeated.

The garrison, with scarce any thing to cover them but heir bravery, survived in the midst of mud, shot and shells, and were at last obliged to give it up more to the powers of time and gunpowder than to the military superiority of the besiegers.

It is my sincere opinion that matters are in a much worse condition with you than what is generally known. Your master's speech at the opening of parliament is like a soliloquy on ill luck. It shows him to be coming a little to his reason, for sense of pain is the first symptom of recovery in profound stupefaction. His condition is deplorable. He is obliged to submit to all the insults of France and Spain, without daring to know or resent them; and thankful for the most trivial evasions to the most humble remonstrances. The time *was* when he could not *deign* an answer to a petition from America, and the time now *is* when he dare not *give* an answer to an affront from France. The capture of Burgoyne's army will sink his consequence as much in Europe as in America. In his speech he expresses his suspicions at the warlike preparations of France and Spain, and as he has only the one army which you command to support his character in the world with, it remains very uncertain when, or in what quarter, it will be most wanted or can be best employed; and this will partly account for the great care you take to keep it from action and attacks, for should Burgoyne's fate be yours, which it probably will, England may take her endless farewell not only of all America but of all the West-Indies.

Never did a nation invite destruction upon itself with the eagerness and ignorance with which Britain has done. Bent upon the ruin of a young and unoffending country, she hath drawn the sword that hath wounded herself to the heart, and in the agony of her resentment hath applied a poison for a cure. Her conduct towards America is a compound of rage and lunacy; she aims at the government of it, yet preserves neither dignity nor character in her methods to obtain it. Were government a mere manufacture or article of commerce, immaterial by whom it should be made or sold, we might as well employ her as another, but when we consider it as the fountain from whence the general manners and morality of a country take their rise, that the persons intrusted with the execution thereof are by their serious example and authority to support these principles, how abominably absurd is the

idea of being hereafter governed by a set of men who have been guilty of forgery, perjury, treachery, theft, and every species of villainy which the lowest wretches on earth could practise or invent. What greater public curse can befal any country than to be under such authority, and what greater blessing than to be delivered therefrom. The soul of any man of sentiment would rise in brave rebellion against them and spurn them from the earth.

The malignant and venomous tempered general Vaughan has amused his savage fancy in burning the whole town of Kingston, in York government, and the late governor of that state, Mr. Tryon, in his letter to general Parsons, has endeavored to justify it, and declared his wish to burn the houses of every committee-man in the country. Such a confession from one who was once entrusted with the powers of civil government, is a reproach to the character. But it is the wish and the declaration of a man whom anguish and disappointment have driven to despair, and who is daily decaying into the grave with constitutional rottenness.

There is not in the compass of language a sufficiency of words to express the baseness of your king, his ministry and his army. They have refined upon villainy till it wants a name. To the fiercer vices of former ages they have added the dregs and scummings of the most finished rascality, and are so completely sunk in serpentine deceit, that there is not left among them *one* generous enemy.

From such men and such masters may the gracious hand of heaven preserve America! And though the sufferings she now endures are heavy, and severe, they are like straws in the wind compared to the weight of evils she would feel under the government of your king, and his pensioned parliament.

There is something in meanness which excites a species of resentment that never subsides, and something in cruelty which stirs up the heart to the highest agony of human hatred; Britain hath filled up both these characters till no addition can be made, and hath not reputation left with us to obtain credit for the slightest promise. The will of God hath parted us, and the deed is registered for eternity. When she shall be a spot scarcely visible among the nations, America shall flourish the favorite of heaven and the friend of mankind.

For the domestic happiness of Britain and the peace of the world I wish she had not a foot of land but what is circumscribed within her own island. Extent of dominion hath been her ruin, and instead of civilizing others hath brutalized herself. Her late reduction of India, under Clive and his successors, was not so properly a conquest as an extermination of mankind. She is the only power who could practise the prodigal barbarity of tying men to the mouths of loaded cannon and blowing them away. It happens that general Burgoyne, who made the report of that horrid transaction, in the house of commons, is now a prisoner with us, and though an enemy, I can appeal to him for the truth of it, being confident that he neither can nor will deny it. Yet Clive received the approbation of the last parliament.

When we take a survey of mankind we cannot help cursing the wretch, who, to the unavoidable misfortunes of nature shall wilfully add the calamities of war. One would think there were evils enough in the world without studying to increase them, and that life is sufficiently short without shaking the sand that measures it. The histories of Alexander, and Charles of Sweden, are the histories of human devils; a good man cannot think of their actions without abhorrence nor of their deaths without rejoicing. To see the bounties of heaven destroyed, the beautiful face of nature laid waste, and the choicest works of creation and art tumbled into ruin, would fetch a curse from the soul of piety itself. But in this country the aggravation is heightened by a new combination of affecting circumstances. America was young, and, compared with other countries, was virtuous. None but a Herod of uncommon malice would have made war upon infancy and innocence; and none but a people of the most finished fortitude, dared, under those circumstances, have resisted the tyranny. The natives, or their ancestors, had fled from the former oppressions of England, and with the industry of bees had changed a wilderness into a habitable world. To Britain they were indebted for nothing. The country was the gift of heaven, and God alone is their Lord and Sovereign.

The time, sir, will come when you, in a melancholy hour, shall reckon up your miseries by your murders in America. Life, with you, begins to wear a clouded aspect. The vision of pleasurable delusion is wearing away, and changing to the barren wild of age and sorrow. The poor

reflection of having served your king will yield you no consolation in your parting moments. He will crumble to the same undistinguished ashes with yourself, and have sins enough of his own to answer for. It is not the farcical benedictions of a bishop, nor the cringing hypocrisy of a court of chaplains, nor the formality of an act of parliament, that can change guilt into innocence, or make the punishment *one* pang the less. You may, perhaps, be unwilling to be serious, but this destruction of the goods of Providence, this havoc of the human race, and this sowing the world with mischief, must be accounted for to him who made and governs it. To us they are only present sufferings, but to him they are deep rebellions.

If there is a sin superior to every other it is that of wilful and offensive war. Most other sins are circumscribed within narrow limits, that is, the power of *one* man cannot give them a very general extension, and many kinds of sins have only a mental existence from which no infection arises; but he who is the author of a war, lets loose the whole contagion of hell, and opens a vein that bleeds a nation to death. We leave it to England and Indians to boast of these honors; we feel no thirst for such savage glory; a nobler flame, a purer spirit animates America. She hath taken up the sword of virtuous defence; she hath bravely put herself between Tyranny and Freedom, between a curse and a blessing, determined to expel the one, and protect the other.

It is the object only of war that makes it honorable. And if there was ever *a just* war since the world began, it is this in which America is now engaged. She invaded no land of yours. She hired no mercenaries to burn your towns, nor Indians to massacre their inhabitants. She wanted nothing from you and was indebted for nothing to you; and thus circumstanced, her defence is honorable and her prosperity is certain.

Yet it is not on the *justice* only, but likewise on the *importance* of this cause that I ground my seeming enthusiastical confidence of our success. The vast extension of America makes her of too much value in the scale of Providence, to be cast, like a pearl before swine, at the feet of an European island; and of much less consequence would it be that Britain were sunk in the sea than that America should miscarry. There has been such a chain of extraordinary events in the discovery of this country at

first, in the peopling and planting it afterwards, in the rearing and nursing it to its present state, and in the protection of it through the present war, that no man can doubt, but Providence hath some nobler end to accomplish than the gratification of the petty elector of Hanover or the ignorant and insignificant king of Britain.

As the blood of the martyrs hath been the seed of the Christian church, so the political persecutions of England will and hath already enriched America with industry, experience, union and importance. Before the present era she was a mere chaos of uncemented colonies, individually exposed to the ravages of the Indians and the invasion of any power that Britain should be at war with. She had nothing that she could call her own. Her felicity depended upon accident. The convulsions of Europe might have thrown her from one conqueror to another, till she had been the slave of all and ruined by every one; for until she had spirit enough to become her own master, there was no knowing to which master she should belong. *That* period, thank God, is past, and she is no longer the dependant, disunited colonies of Britain, but the Independent and United States of America, knowing no master but heaven and herself. You or your king may call this "delusion," "rebellion," or what name you please. To us it is perfectly indifferent. The issue will determine the character, and time will give it a name as lasting as his own.

You have now, sir, tried the fate of three campaigns, and can fully declare to England, that nothing is to be got, on your part, but blows and broken bones, and nothing on hers but waste of trade and credit, and an increase of poverty and taxes. You are now only where you might have been two years ago, without the loss of a single ship, and yet not a step more forward towards the conquest of the continent; because, as I have already hinted, "an army in a city can never be a conquering army." The full amount of your losses, since the beginning of the war, exceeds twenty thousand men, besides millions of treasure, for which you have nothing in exchange. Our expenses, though great, are circulated within ourselves. Yours is a direct sinking of money, and that from both ends at once; first, in hiring troops out of the nation, and in paying them afterwards, because the money in neither case can return to Britain. We are already in possession of the prize, you only in pursuit of it. To us it is a real treasure, to you it

would be only an empty triumph. Our expenses will repay themselves with tenfold interest, while yours entail upon you everlasting poverty.

Take a review, sir, of the ground which you have gone over, and let it teach you policy, if it cannot honesty. You stand but on a very tottering foundation. A change of the ministry in England may probably bring your measures into question and your head to the block. Clive, with all his successes, had some difficulty in escaping, and yours being all a war of losses, will afford you less pretensions, and your enemies more grounds for impeachment.

Go home, sir, and endeavor to save the remains of your ruined country, by a just representation of the madness of her measures. A few moments, well applied, may yet preserve her from political destruction. I am not one of those who wish to see Europe in a flame, because I am persuaded that such an event will not shorten the war. The rupture, at present, is confined between the two powers of America and England. England finds that she cannot conquer America, and America has no wish to conquer England. You are fighting for what you can never obtain, and we defending what we never mean to part with. A few words, therefore, settle the bargain. Let England mind her own business and we will mind ours. Govern yourselves and we will govern ourselves. You may then trade where you please unmolested by us, and we will trade where we please unmolested by you; and such articles as we can purchase of each other better than elsewhere may be mutually done. If it were possible that you could carry on the war for twenty years you must still come to this point at last, or worse, and the sooner you think of it the better it will be for you.

My official situation enables me to know the repeated insults which Britain is obliged to put up with from foreign powers, and the wretched shifts that she is driven to, to gloss them over. Her reduced strength and exhausted coffers in a three years' war with America, have given a powerful superiority to France and Spain. She is not now a match for them. But if neither councils can prevail on her to think, nor sufferings awaken her to reason, she must e'en go on, till the honor of England becomes a proverb of contempt, and Europe dub her the Land of Fools.

I am, Sir, with every wish for an honorable peace,

Your friend, enemy, and countryman,

COMMON SENSE.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF AMERICA.

With all the pleasure with which a man exchanges bad company for good, I take my leave of Sir William and return to you. It is now nearly three years since the tyranny of Britain received its first repulse by the arms of America. A period, which has given birth to a new world, and erected a monument to the folly of the old.

I cannot help being sometimes surprised at the complimentary references which I have seen and heard made to ancient histories and transactions. The wisdom, civil governments, and sense of honor of the states of Greece and Rome, are frequently held up as objects of excellence and imitation. Mankind have lived to very little purpose, if, at this period of the world, they must go two or three thousand years back for lessons and examples. We do great injustice to ourselves by placing them in such a superior line. We have no just authority for it, neither can we tell why it is that we should suppose ourselves inferior.

Could the mist of antiquity be cleared away, and men and things be viewed as they really were, it is more than probable that they would admire us, rather than we them. America has surmounted a greater variety and combination of difficulties, than, I believe, ever fell to the share of any one people in the same space of time, and has replenished the world with more useful knowledge and sounder maxims of civil government than were ever produced in any age before. Had it not been for America there had been no such thing as freedom left throughout the whole universe. England hath lost hers in a long chain of right reasoning from wrong principles, and it is from this country now that she must learn the resolution to redress herself and the wisdom how to accomplish it.

The Grecians and Romans were strongly possessed of the *spirit* of liberty but *not the principle*, for at the time that they were determined not to be slaves themselves, they employed their power to enslave the rest of mankind. But this distinguished era is blotted by no one misanthropical vice. In short, if the principle on which the cause is founded, the universal blessings that are to arise from it, the difficulties that accompanied it, the wisdom with which it has been debated, the fortitude by which it

has been supported, the strength of the power which we had to oppose, and the condition in which we undertook it, be all taken in one view, we may justly style it the most virtuous and illustrious revolution that ever graced the history of mankind.

A good opinion of ourselves is exceedingly necessary in private life, but absolutely necessary in public life, and of the utmost importance in supporting national character. I have no notion of yielding the palm of the United States to any Grecians or Romans that were ever born. We have equalled the bravest in times of danger, and excelled the wisest in the construction of civil governments.

From this agreeable eminence let us take a review of present affairs. The spirit of corruption is so inseparably interwoven with British politics, that their ministry suppose all mankind are governed by the same motives. They have no idea of a people submitting even to temporary inconvenience from an attachment to rights and privileges. Their plans of business are calculated *by* the hour and *for* the hour, and are uniform in nothing but the corruption which gives them birth. They never had, neither have they at this time, any regular plan for the conquest of America by arms. They know not how to go about it; neither have they power to effect it if they did know. The thing is not within the compass of human practicability; for America is too extensive either to be fully conquered or *passively* defended. But she may be *actively* defended by defeating or making prisoners of the army that invades her. And this is the only system of defence that can be effectual in a large country.

There is something in a war carried on by invasion which makes it differ in circumstances from any other mode of war, because he who conducts it cannot tell whether the ground he gains, be for him, or against him, when he first obtains it. In the winter of 1776, general Howe marched with an air of victory through the Jerseys, the consequence of which was his defeat; and general Burgoyne at Saratoga experienced the same fate from the same cause. The Spaniards about two years ago were defeated by the Algerines in the same manner, that is, their first triumphs became a trap in which they were totally routed. And whoever will attend to the circumstances and events of a war carried on by invasion, will find,

that any invader, in order to be finally conquered must first begin to conquer.

I confess myself one of those who believe the loss of Philadelphia to be attended with more advantages than injuries. The case stood thus. The enemy imagined Philadelphia to be of more importance to us than it really was; for we all know that it had long ceased to be a port: not a cargo of goods had been brought into it for near a twelvemonth, nor any fixed manufactories, nor even ship-building carried on in it; yet as the enemy believed the conquest of it to be practicable, and to that belief added the absurd idea that the soul of all America was centred there, and would be conquered there, it naturally follows, that their possession of it, by not answering the end proposed, must break up the plans they had so foolishly gone upon, and either oblige them to form a new one, for which their present strength is not sufficient, or to give over the attempt.

We never had so small an army to fight against, nor so fair an opportunity of final success as *now*. The death wound is already given. The day is ours if we follow it up. The enemy, by his situation, is within our reach, and by his reduced strength is within our power. The ministers of Britain may rage as they please, but our part is to conquer their armies. Let them wrangle and welcome, but let it not draw our attention from the *one* thing needful. *Here, in this* spot is our own business to be accomplished, our felicity secured. What we have now to do is as clear as light, and the way to do it is as straight as a line. It needs not to be commented upon, yet, in order to be perfectly understood I will put a case that cannot admit of a mistake.

Had the armies under generals Howe and Burgoyne been united and taken post at Germantown, and had the northern army, under general Gates, been joined to that under general Washington, at Whitemarsh, the consequence would have been a general action; and if in that action we had killed and taken the same number of officers and men, that is, between nine and ten thousand, with the same quantity of artillery, arms, stores, &c. as have been taken at the northward, and obliged general Howe with the remains of his army, that is, with the same number he now commands, to take shelter in Philadelphia, we should certainly have thought ourselves the greatest heroes in the world; and should, as soon as the season permitted, have

collected together all the force of the continent and laid siege to the city, for it requires a much greater force to besiege an enemy in a town than to defeat him in the field. The case *now* is just the same as if it had been produced by the means I have here supposed. Between nine and ten thousand have been killed and taken, all their stores are in our possession, and general Howe, in consequence of that victory, has thrown himself for shelter into Philadelphia. He, or his trifling friend Galloway, may form what pretences they please, yet no just reason can be given for their going into winter quarters so early as the 19th of October, but their apprehensions of a defeat if they continued out, or their conscious inability of keeping the field with safety. I see no advantage which can arise to America by hunting the enemy from state to state. It is a triumph without a prize, and wholly unworthy the attention of a people determined to conquer. Neither can any state promise itself security while the enemy remains in a condition to transport themselves from one part of the continent to another. Howe, likewise, cannot conquer where we have no army to oppose, therefore any such removals in him are mean and cowardly, and reduces Britain to a common pilferer. If he retreats from Philadelphia, he will be despised; if he stays, he may be shut up and starved out, and the country, if he advances into it, may become his Saratoga. He has his choice of evils and we of opportunities. If he moves early, it is not only a sign but a proof that he expects no reinforcement, and his delay will prove that he either waits for the arrival of a plan to go upon, or force to execute it, or both; in *which* case, our strength will increase more than his, therefore in *any* case we cannot be wrong if we do but proceed.

The particular condition of Pennsylvania deserves the attention of all the other states. Her military strength must not be estimated by the number of inhabitants. Here are men of all nations, characters, professions and interests. Here are the firmest whigs, surviving, like sparks in the ocean, unquenched and uncooled in the midst of discouragement and disaffection. Here are men losing their all with cheerfulness, and collecting fire and fortitude from the flames of their own estates. Here are others skulking in secret, many making a market of the times, and numbers who are changing to whig or tory with the circumstances of every day.

It is by mere dint of fortitude and perseverance that the higs of this state have been able to maintain so good a ountenance, and do even what they have done. We want elp, and the sooner it can arrive the more effectual it will e. The invaded state, be it which it may, will always eel an additional burden upon its back, and be hard set support its civil power with sufficient authority: and is difficulty will rise or fall, in proportion as the other tates throw in their assistance to the common cause.

The enemy will most probably make many manœuvres t the opening of this campaign, to amuse and draw off the ttention of the several states from the *one thing needful*. Ve may expect to hear of alarms and pretended expeditions to *this* place and *that* place, to the southward, the astward and the northward, all intended to prevent our orming into one formidable body. The less the enemy's trength is, the more subtleties of this kind will they make. se of. Their existence depends upon it, because the orce of America, when collected, is sufficient to swallow heir present army up. It is therefore our business to nake short work of it, by bending our whole attention to *his one principal point*, for the instant that the main body nder general Howe is defeated, all the inferior alarms hroughout the continent, like so many shadows, will follow is downfal.

The only way to finish a war with the least possible loodshed, or perhaps without any, is to collect an army, gainst the power of which, the enemy shall have no chance. By not doing this, we prolong the war, and double both the alamities and expenses of it. What a rich and happy ountry would America be, were she, by a vigorous exertion o reduce Howe as she has reduced Burgoyne. Her currency would rise to millions beyond its present value. Every man would be rich, and every man would have it n his power to be happy. And why not do these things? What is there to hinder? America is her own mistress and an do what she pleases.

If we had not at this time a man in the field, we could, nevertheless, raise an army in a few weeks, sufficient to overwhelm all the force which general Howe at present commands. Vigor and determination will do any thing and every thing. We began the war with this kind of spirit, why not end it with the same? Here, gentlemen, is the enemy. Here is the army. The interest, the happiness,

of all America, is centred in this half ruined spot. Come and help us. Here are laurels, come and share them. Here are tories, come and help us to expel them. Here are whigs that will make you welcome, and enemies that dread your coming.

The worst of all policy is that of doing things by halves. Penny wise and pound foolish, has been the ruin of thousands. The present spring, if rightly improved, will free us from all troubles, and save us the expense of millions. We have now only one army to cope with. No opportunity can be fairer; no prospect more promising. I shall conclude this paper with a few outlines of a plan, either for filling up the battalions with expedition, or for raising an additional force, for any limited time, on any sudden emergency.

That in which every man is interested, is every man's duty to support. And any burden which falls equally on all men, and from which every man is to receive an equal benefit, is consistent with the most perfect ideas of liberty. I would wish to revive something of that virtuous ambition which first called America into the field. Then every man was eager to do his part, and perhaps the principal reason why we have in any degree fallen therefrom, is, because we did not set a right value by it at first, but left it to blaze out of itself, instead of regulating and preserving it by just proportions of rest and service.

Suppose any state, whose number of effective inhabitants was 80,000, should be required to furnish 3,200 men towards the defence of the continent on any sudden emergency.

1st, Let the whole number of effective inhabitants be divided into hundreds; then if each of those hundreds turn out four men, the whole number of 3,200 will be had.

2d, Let the name of each hundred men be entered in a book, and let four dollars be collected from each man, with as much more as any of the gentlemen, whose abilities can afford it, shall please to throw in, which gifts likewise shall be entered against the names of the donors.

3d, Let the sums so collected be offered as a present, over and above the bounty of twenty dollars, to any four who may be inclined to propose themselves as volunteers: if more than four offer, the majority of the subscribers present shall determine which; if none offer, then four out of the hundred shall be taken by lot, who shall be entitled to

the said sums, and shall either go, or provide others that will, in the space of six days.

4th, As it will always happen, that in the space of ground on which an hundred men shall live, there will be always a number of persons who, by age and infirmity, are incapable of doing personal service, and as such persons are generally possessed of the greatest part of the property in any country, their portion of service, therefore, will be to furnish each man with a blanket, which will make a regimental coat, jacket, and breeches, or clothes in lieu thereof, and another for a watch cloak, and two pair of shoes—for however choice people may be of these things matters not in cases of this kind—those who live always in houses can find many ways to keep themselves warm, but it is a shame and a sin to suffer a soldier in the field to want a blanket while there is one in the country.

Should the clothing not be wanted, the superannuated or infirm persons possessing property, may, in lieu thereof, throw in their money subscriptions towards increasing the bounty; for though age will naturally exempt a person from personal service, it cannot exempt him from his share of the charge, because the men are raised for the defence of property and liberty, jointly.

There never was a scheme against which objections might not be raised. But this alone is not a sufficient reason for rejection. The only line to judge truly upon, is, to draw out and admit all the objections which can fairly be made, and place against them all the contrary qualities, conveniences and advantages, then by striking a balance you come at the true character of any scheme, principle or position.

The most material advantages of the plan here proposed are, ease, expedition, and cheapness; yet the men so raised get a much larger bounty than is any where at present given; because all the expenses, extravagance, and consequent idleness of recruiting are saved or prevented. The country incurs no new debt, nor interest thereon; the whole matter being all settled at once and entirely done with. It is a subscription answering all the purposes of a tax, without either the charge or trouble of collecting. The men are ready for the field with the greatest possible expedition, because it becomes the duty of the inhabitants themselves, in every part of the country, to find their proportion of men, instead of leaving it to a recruiting

sergeant, who, be he ever so industrious, cannot know always where to apply.

I do not propose this as a regular digested plan, neither will the limits of this paper admit of any further remarks upon it. I believe it to be a hint capable of much improvement, and as such submit it to the public.

COMMON SENSE.

Lancaster, March 21, 1778.

THE CRISIS.

NO. VI.

—

TO THE EARL OF CARLISLE, GENERAL CLINTON, AND WILLIAM EDEN, Esq. BRITISH COMMISSIONERS, AT NEW-YORK.

THERE is a dignity in the warm passions of a whig, which is never to be found in the cold malice of a tory. In the one, nature is only heated—in the other she is poisoned. The instant the former has it in his power to punish, he feels a disposition to forgive; but the canine venom of the latter knows no relief but revenge. This general distinction will, I believe, apply in all cases, and suit as well the meridian of England as America.

As I presume your last proclamation will undergo the strictures of other pens, I shall confine my remarks to only a few parts thereof. All that you have said might have been comprised in half the compass. It is tedious and unmeaning and only a repetition of your former follies, with here and there an offensive aggravation. Your cargo of pardons will have no market—It is unfashionable to look at them—even speculation is at an end. They have become a perfect drug, and no way calculated for the climate.

In the course of your proclamation you say, "The policy as well as the *benevolence of Great Britain* have thus far checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people still considered as their fellow subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become again a source of mutual advantage." What you mean by "the *benevolence* of Great Britain" is to me inconceivable. To put a plain question: do you consider yourselves men or devils? For until this point is settled, no determinate sense can be put upon the expression. You have already equalled, and in

many cases excelled, the savages of either Indies; and if you have yet a cruelty in store you must have imported it, unmixed with every human material, from the original warehouse of hell.

To the interposition of Providence, and her blessings on our endeavors, and not to *British benevolence*, are we indebted for the short chain that limits your ravages. Remember you do not at this time, command a foot of land on the continent of America. Staten-Island, York-Island, a small part of Long-Island, and Rhode-Island, circumscribe your power; and even those you hold at the expense of the West-Indies. To avoid a defeat or prevent a desertion of your troops, you have taken up your quarters in holes and corners of inaccessible security; and in order to conceal what every one can perceive, you now endeavor to impose your weakness upon us for an act of mercy. If you think to succeed by such shadowy devices. you are but infants in the political world; you have the A, B, C, of stratagem yet to learn, and are wholly ignorant of the people you have to contend with. Like men in a state of intoxication, you forget that the rest of the world have eyes, and that the same stupidity which conceals you from yourselves exposes you to their satire and contempt.

The paragraph which I have quoted, stands as an introduction to the following: "But when that country (America) professes the unnatural design, not only of estranging herself from us, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest is changed; and the question is how far Great-Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless, a connexion contrived for her ruin, and the aggrandizement of France. Under such circumstances, the laws of self preservation must direct the conduct of Britain, and if the British colonies are to become an accession to France, will direct her to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy."

I consider you in this declaration, like madmen biting in the hour of death. It contains likewise a fraudulent meanness; for, in order to justify a barbarous conclusion, you have advanced a false position. The treaty we have formed with France is open, noble and generous. It is true policy, founded on sound philosophy, and neither a surrender or mortgage, as you would scandalously insinuate. I have seen every article, and speak from positive knowledge.

In France, we have found an affectionate friend and faithful ally: in Britain nothing but tyranny, cruelty and infidelity.

But the happiness is, that the mischief you threaten, is not in your power to execute; and if it were, the punishment would return upon you in a ten-fold degree. The humanity of America hath hitherto restrained her from acts of retaliation, and the affection she retains for many individuals in England, who have fed, clothed, and comforted her prisoners, has, to the present day, warded off her resentment, and operated as a screen to the whole. But even these considerations must cease, when national objects interfere and oppose them. Repeated aggravations will provoke a retort, and policy justify the measure. We mean now to take you seriously up upon your own ground and principle, and as you do, so shall you be done by.

You ought to know, gentlemen, that England and Scotland, are far more exposed to incendiary desolation than America, in her present state, can possibly be. We occupy a country, with but few towns, and whose riches consist in land and annual produce. The two last can suffer but little and that only within a very limited compass. In Britain it is otherwise. Her wealth lies chiefly in cities and large towns, the repositories of manufactures and fleets of merchantmen.—There is not a nobleman's country seat but may be laid in ashes by a single person. Your own may probably contribute to the proof: in short, there is no evil which cannot be returned when you come to incendiary mischief.—The ships in the Thames, may certainly be as easily set on fire, as the temporary bridge was a few years ago; yet of that affair no discovery was ever made; and the loss you would sustain by such an event, executed at a proper season, is infinitely greater than any you can inflict. The East-India house, and the bank, neither are, nor can be secure from this sort of destruction, and, as Dr. Price justly observes, a fire at the latter would bankrupt the nation. It has never been the custom of France and England when at war, to make those havocs on each other because the ease with which they could retaliate, rendered it as impolitic as if each had destroyed his own.

But think not, gentlemen, that our distance secures you, or our invention fails us. We can much easier accomplish such a point than any nation in Europe. We talk the same language, dress in the same habit, and appear with the

same manners as yourselves. We can pass from one part of England to another unsuspected; many of us are as well acquainted with the country as you are, and should you impolitically provoke us, you will most assuredly lament the effects of it. Mischiefs of this kind require no army to execute them. The means are obvious, and the opportunities unguardable. I hold up a warning to your senses, if you have any left, and "to the unhappy people likewise, whose affairs are committed to you."* I call not with the rancor of an enemy, but the earnestness of a friend, on the deluded people of England, lest between your blunders and theirs, they sink beneath the evils contrived for us.

"He who lives in a glass house," says a Spanish proverb, "should never begin throwing stones." This, gentlemen, is exactly your case, and you must be the most ignorant of mankind, or suppose us so, not to see on which side the balance of accounts will fall. There are many other modes of retaliation, which, for several reasons, I choose not to mention. But be assured of this, that the instant you put a threat into execution, a counter-blow will follow it. If you openly profess yourselves savages, it is high time we should treat you as such, and if nothing but distress can recover you to reason, to punish will become an office of charity.

While your fleet lay last winter in the Delaware, I offered my service to the Pennsylvania navy-board then at Trenton, as one who would make a party with them, or any four or five gentlemen on an expedition down the river to set fire to it, and though it was not then accepted, nor the thing personally attempted, it is more than probable that your own folly will provoke a much more ruinous act. Say not when mischief is done, that you had not warning, and remember that we do not begin it, but mean to repay it. Thus much for your savage and impolitic threat.

In another part of your proclamation you say, "But if the honors of a military life are become the object of the Americans, let them seek those honors under the banners of their rightful sovereign, and in fighting the battles of the united British empire, against our late mutual and natural enemies." Surely! the union of absurdity with madness was never marked in more distinguishable lines than these. Your rightful sovereign, as you call him, may do well

* General Clinton's letter to Congress.

enough for you, who dare not inquire into the humble capacities of the man; but we who estimate persons and things by their real worth, cannot suffer our judgments to be so imposed upon; and, unless it is your wish to see him exposed, it ought to be your endeavor to keep him out of sight. The less you have to say about him the better. We have done with him, and that ought to be answer enough. You have been often told so. Strange! that the answer must be so often repeated. You go a begging with your king as with a brat, or with some unsaleable commodity you were tired of; and though every body tells you no, no, still you keep hawking him about. But there is one that will have him in a little time, and as we have no inclination to disappoint you of a customer, we bid nothing for him.

The impertinent folly of the paragraph that I have just quoted, deserves no other notice than to be laughed at and thrown by, but the principle on which it is founded is detestable. We are invited to submit to a man who has attempted by every cruelty to destroy us, and to join him in making war against France, who is already at war against him for our support.

Can bedlam, in concert with lucifer, form a more mad and devilish request? Were it possible a people could sink into such apostacy they would deserve to be swept from the earth like the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The proposition is an universal affront to the rank which man holds in the creation, and an indignity to him who placed him there. It supposes him made up without a spark of honor, and under no obligation to God or man.

What sort of men or Christians must you suppose the Americans to be, who, after seeing their most humble petitions insultingly rejected; the most grievous laws passed to distress them in every quarter; an undeclared war let loose upon them, and Indians and negroes invited to the slaughter: who, after seeing their kinsmen murdered, their fellow citizens starved to death in prisons, and their houses and property destroyed and burned: who, after the most serious appeals to Heaven; the most solemn abjuration by oath of all government connected with you, and the most heart-felt pledges and protestations of faith to each other; and who, after soliciting the friendship, and entering into alliances with other nations, should at last break through all these obligations, civil and divine, by complying with

your horrid and infernal proposal. Ought we ever after to be considered as a part of the human race? Or ought we not rather to be blotted from the society of mankind, and become a spectacle of misery to the world? But there is something in corruption, which, like a jaundiced eye, transfers the color of itself to the object it looks upon, and sees every thing stained and impure; for unless you were capable of such conduct yourselves, you would never have supposed such a character in us. The offer fixes your infamy. It exhibits you as a nation without faith; with whom oaths and treaties are considered as trifles, and the breaking them as the breaking of a bubble. Regard to decency or to rank might have taught you better, or pride inspired you, though virtue could not. There is not left a step in the degradation of character to which you can now descend; you have put your foot on the ground floor, and the key of the dungeon is turned upon you.

That the invitation may want nothing of being a complete monster, you have thought proper to finish it with an assertion which has no foundation, either in fact or philosophy; and as Mr. Ferguson, your secretary, is a man of letters, and has made civil society his study, and published a treatise on that subject, I address this part to him.

In the close of the paragraph which I last quoted, France is styled the "natural enemy" of England, and by way of lugging us into some strange idea, she is styled "the late mutual and natural enemy" of both countries. I deny that she ever was the natural enemy of either; and that there does not exist in nature such a principle. The expression is an unmeaning barbarism, and wholly unphilosophical, when applied to beings of the same species, let their station in the creation be what it may. We have a perfect idea of a natural enemy when we think of the devil, because the enmity is perpetual, unalterable, and unabateable. It admits neither of peace, truce, or treaty; consequently the warfare is eternal, and therefore it is natural. But man with man cannot arrange in the same opposition. Their quarrels are accidental and equivocally created. They become friends or enemies as the change of temper, or the cast of interest inclines them. The Creator of man did not constitute them the natural enemy of each other. He has not made any one order of beings so. Even wolves may quarrel, still they herd together. If any two nations are so, then must all nations be so, otherwise

t is not nature but custom, and the offence frequently orig-nates with the accuser. England is as truly the natural enemy of France, as France is of England, and perhaps more so. Separated from the rest of Europe, she has con-racted an unsocial habit of manners, and imagines in others the jealousy she creates in herself. Never long satisfied with peace, she supposes the discontent universal, and buoyed up with her own importance, conceives her-self the only object pointed at. The expression has been often used, and always with a fraudulent design; for when the idea of a natural enemy is conceived, it prevents all other inquiries, and the real cause of the quarrel is hidden in the universality of the conceit. Men start at the notion of a natural enemy, and ask no other question. The cry obtains credit like the alarm of a mad dog, and is one of those kind of tricks, which, by operating on the common passions, secures their interest through their folly.

But we, sir, are not to be thus imposed upon. We live in a large world, and have extended our ideas beyond the limits and prejudices of an island. We hold out the right hand of friendship to all the universe, and we conceive that there is a sociality in the manners of France, which is much better disposed to peace and negotiation than that of England, and until the latter becomes more civilized, she cannot expect to live long at peace with any power. Her common language is vulgar and offensive, and chil-dren with their milk suck in the rudiments of insult—"The arm of Britain! The mighty arm of Britain! Britain that shakes the earth to its centre and its poles! The scourge of France! The terror of the world! That governs with a nod, and pours down vengeance like a God." This lan-guage neither makes a nation great or little; but it shows a savageness of manners, and has a tendency to keep na-tional animosity alive. The entertainments of the stage are calculated to the same end, and almost every public exhibition is tinctured with insult. Yet England is always in dread of France. Terrified at the apprehension of an invasion. Suspicious of being outwitted in a treaty, and privately cringing, though she is publicly offending. Let her therefore, reform her manners and do justice, and she will find the idea of a natural enemy, to be only a phan-tom of her own imagination.

Little did I think, at this period of the war, to see a proclamation which could promise you no one useful

purpose whatever, and tend only to expose you. One w think that you were just awakened from a four years' dr and knew nothing of what had passed in the interval this a time to be offering pardons, or renewing the lon gotten subjects of charters and taxation? Is it worth while, after every force has failed you, to retreat t the shelter of argument and persuasion? Or can think that we, with nearly half your army prisoners in alliance with France, are to be begged or threa into submission by a piece of paper? But as commis ers, at a hundred pounds sterling a week each, you ceive yourselves bound to do something, and the gen ill fortune told you, that you must write.

For my own part, I have not put pen to paper several months. Convinced of our superiority by the of every campaign, I was inclined to hope, that that v all the rest of the world now see, would become visil you, and therefore felt unwilling to ruffle your temp fretting you with repetitions and discoveries. There been intervals of hesitation in your conduct, from wh seemed a pity to disturb you, and a charity to leav to yourselves. You have often stopped, as if you in ed to think, but your thoughts have ever been too ea too late.

There was a time when Britain disdained to answ even hear a petition from America. That time is and she in her turn is petitioning our acceptance. now stand on higher ground, and offer her peace; an time will come when she, perhaps in vain, will ask it us. The latter case is as probable as the former ever She cannot refuse to acknowledge our independence greater obstinacy than she before refused to repe laws; and if America alone could bring her to th united with France she will reduce her to the c There is something in obstinacy which differs from other passion; whenever it fails it never recovers either breaks like iron, or crumbles sulkily away fractured arch. Most other passions have their pe of fatigue and rest; their suffering and their cure; bu stinacy has no resource, and the first wound is m You have already begun to give it up, and you will, the natural construction of the vice, find yourselves obliged and inclined to do so.

If you look back you see nothing but loss and disgrace. you look forward the same scene continues, and the ose is an impenetrable gloom. You may plan and exe- ute little mischiefs, but are they worth the expense they ost you, or will such partial evils have any effect on the eneral cause? Your expedition to Egg-Harbor, will be lt at a distance like an attack upon a hen-roost, and ex- ose you in Europe, with a sort of childish phrenzy. Is it orth while to keep an army to protect you in writing proc- mations, or to get once a year into winter-quarters? ossessing yourselves of towns is not conquest, but conven- nce, and in which you will one day or other be trepan- ed. Your retreat from Philadelphia, was only a timely cape, and your next expedition may be less fortunate.

It would puzzle all the politicians in the universe to con- ive what you stay for, or why you should have staid so ng. You are prosecuting a war in which you confess ou have neither object nor hope, and that conquest, could be effected, would not repay the charges: in the mean hile, the rest of your affairs are running to ruin, and a uropean war kindling against you. In such a situation, ere is neither doubt nor difficulty; the first rudiments of ason will determine the choice, for if peace can be pro- ured with more advantages than even a conquest can be btained, he must be an ideot indeed that hesitates.

But you are probably buoyed up by a set of wretched ortals, who, having deceived themselves, are cringing, ith the duplicity of a spaniel, for a little temporary bread. hose men will tell you just what you please. It is their terest to amuse, in order to lengthen out their protec- on. They study to keep you amongst them for that very rpose; and in proportion as you disregard their advice, nd grow callous to their complaints, they will stretch into probability, and season their flattery the higher. Char- ters like these, are to be found in every country, and very country will despise them.

COMMON SENSE.

hiladelphia, Oct. 20, 1778.

THE CRISIS.

NO. VII.

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

THERE are stages in the business of serious life in wh
to amuse is cruel, but to deceive is to destroy; and it i
little consequence, in the conclusion, whether men dece
themselves or submit, by a kind of mutual consent, to
impositions of each other. That England has long b
under the influence of delusion or mistake, needs no ot
proof than the unexpected and wretched situation that
is now involved in: and so powerful has been the influen
that no provision was ever made or thought of agai
the misfortune, because the possibility of its happen
was never conceived.

The general and successful resistance of America,
conquest of Burgoyne, and a war with France, were trea
in parliament as the dreams of a discontented opposit
or a distempered imagination. They were beheld as
jects unworthy of a serious thought, and the bare inti
tion of them afforded the ministry a triumph of laugh
Short triumph indeed! For every thing which has b
predicted has happened, and all that was promised
failed. A long series of politics so remarkably distingu
ed by a succession of misfortunes, without one allevia
turn, must certainly have something in it systematic
wrong. It is sufficient to awaken the most credulous
suspicion, and the most obstinate into thought. Either
means in your power are insufficient, or the measure
planned; either the execution has been bad, or the th
attempted impracticable; or, to speak more emphatica
either you are not able, or heaven is not willing. I
why is it that you have not conquered us? Who, or

as prevented you? You have had every opportunity that ·ou could desire, and succeeded to your utmost wish in very preparatory means. Your fleets and armies have rrived in America without an accident. No uncommon ıisfortune hath intervened. No foreign nation hath in-erfered until the time which you had allotted for victory ras past. The opposition either in or out of parliament, either disconcerted your measures, retarded or dimin-shed your force. They only foretold your fate. Every ıinisterial scheme was carried with as high a hand as if he whole nation had been unanimous. Every thing want-d was asked for, and every thing asked for was granted.

A greater force was not within the compass of your abil-ties to send, and the time you sent it was of all others the ıost favorable. You were then at rest with the whole rorld beside. You had the range of every court in Eu-ope uncontradicted by us. You amused us with a tale of ommissioners of peace, and under that disguise collected numerous army and came almost unexpectedly upon us. The force was much greater than we looked for; and that hich we had to oppose it with, was unequal in numbers, adly armed, and poorly disciplined; beside which, it was mbodied only for a short time, and expired within a w months after your arrival. We had governments to rm; measures to concert; an army to train, and every ecessary article to import or to create. Our non-impor-ation scheme had exhausted our stores, and your com-and by sea intercepted our supplies. We were a people nknown, and unconnected with the political world, and trangers to the disposition of foreign powers. Could you ossibly wish for a more favorable conjunction of circum-tances? Yet all these have happened and passed away, nd, as it were, left you with a laugh. They are likewise vents of such an original nativity as can never happen gain, unless a new world should arise from the ocean.

If any thing can be a lesson to presumption, surely the ircumstances of this war will have their effect. Had Britain been defeated by any European power, her pride ould have drawn consolation from the importance of her onquerors; but in the present case, she is excelled by hose that she affected to despise, and her own opinions torting upon herself, become an aggravation of her dis-race. Misfortune and experience are lost upon mankind, hen they produce neither reflection nor reformation.

Evils, like poisons, have their uses, and there are diseases which no other remedy can reach. It has been the crime and folly of England to suppose herself invincible, and that, without acknowledging or perceiving that a full third of her strength was drawn from the country she is now at war with. The arm of Britain has been spoken of as the arm of the Almighty, and she has lived of late as if she thought the whole world created for her diversion. Her politics, instead of civilizing, has tended to brutalize mankind, and under the vain, unmeaning title of "Defender of the Faith," she has made war like an Indian against the religion of humanity. Her cruelties in the East-Indies will *never* be forgotten; and it is somewhat remarkable that the produce of that ruined country, transported to America, should there kindle up a war to punish the destroyer. The chain is continued, though with a mysterious kind of uniformity both in the crime and the punishment. The latter runs parallel with the former; and time and fate will give it a perfect illustration.

When information is withheld, ignorance becomes a reasonable excuse; and one would charitably hope that the people of England do not encourage cruelty from choice but from mistake. Their recluse situation, surrounded by the sea, preserves them from the calamities of war, and keeps them in the dark as to the conduct of their own armies. They see not, therefore they feel not. They tell the tale that is told them and believe it, and accustomed to no other news than their own, they receive it, stripped of its horrors and prepared for the palate of the nation, through the channel of the London Gazette. They are made to believe that their generals and armies differ from those of other nations, and have nothing of rudeness or barbarity in them. They suppose them what they wish them to be. They feel a disgrace in thinking otherwise, and naturally encourage the belief from a partiality to themselves. There was a time when I felt the same prejudices, and reasoned from the same errors; but experience, sad and painful experience, has taught me better. What the conduct of former armies was, I know not, but what the conduct of the present is, I well know. It is low, cruel, indolent and profligate: and had the people of America no other cause for separation than what the army has occasioned, that alone is cause sufficient.

The field of politics in England is far more extensive han that of news. Men have a right to reason for themelves, and though they cannot contradict the intelligence n the London Gazette, they may frame upon it what seniments they please. But the misfortune is, that a general gnorance has prevailed over the whole nation respecting merica. The ministry and minority have both been rrong. The former was always so; the latter only lately o. Politics to be executively right, must have a unity of neans and time, and a defect in either overthrows the whole. The ministry rejected the plans of the minority while they were practicable, and joined in them when they became mpracticable. From wrong measures they got into wrong ime, and have now completed the circle of absurdity by closing it upon themselves.

I happened to come to America a few months before the breaking out of hostilities. I found the disposition of the people such, that they might have been led by a thread and governed by a reed. Their suspicion was quick and penetrating, but their attachment to Britain was obstinate, and it was at that time a kind of treason to speak against it. They disliked the ministry, but they esteemed the nation. Their idea of grievance operated without resentment, and their single object was reconciliation. Bad as I believed the ministry to be, I never conceived them capable of a measure so rash and wicked as the commencing of hostilities; much less did I imagine the nation would encourage it. I viewed the dispute as a kind of law-suit, in which I supposed the parties would find a way either to decide or settle it. I had no thoughts of independence or of arms. The world could not then have persuaded me that I should be either a soldier or an author. If I had any talents for either, they were buried in me, and might ever have continued so had not the necessity of the times dragged and driven them into action. I had formed my plan of life, and conceiving myself happy, wished every body else so. But when the country, into which I had just set my foot, was set on fire about my ears, it was time to stir. It was time for every man to stir. Those who had been long settled had something to defend; those who had just come had something to pursue; and the call and the concern was equal and universal. For in a country where all men were once adventurers, the difference of a few years in their arrival could make none in their right.

The breaking out of hostilities opened a new suspicion in the politics of America, which, though at that time very rare, has since been proved to be very right. What I allude to is, "a secret and fixed determination in the British cabinet to annex America to the crown of England as a conquered country." If this be taken as the object, then the whole line of conduct pursued by the ministry, though rash in its origin and ruinous in its consequences, is nevertheless uniform and consistent in its parts. It applies to every case and resolves every difficulty. But if taxation or any thing else be taken in its room, there is no proportion between the object and the charge. Nothing but the whole soil and property of the country can be placed as a possible equivalent against the millions which the ministry expended. No taxes raised in America could possibly repay it. A revenue of two millions sterling a year would not discharge the sum and interest accumulated thereon, in twenty years.

Reconciliation never appears to have been the wish or the object of the administration, they looked on conquest as certain and infallible, and under that persuasion sought to drive the Americans into what they might style a general rebellion, and then, crushing them with arms in their hands, reap the rich harvest of a general confiscation, and silence them for ever. The dependants at court were too numerous to be provided for in England. The market for plunder in the East-Indies was over; and the profligacy of government required that a new mine should be opened, and that mine could be no other than America, conquered and forfeited. They had no where else to go. Every other channel was drained; and extravagance, with the thirst of a drunkard, was gaping for supplies.

If the ministry deny this to have been their plan, it becomes them to explain what was their plan. For either they have abused us in coveting property they never labored for, or they have abused you in expending an amazing sum upon an incompetent object. Taxation, as I mentioned before, could never be worth the charge of obtaining it by arms; and any kind of formal obedience which America could have made, would have weighed with the lightness of a laugh against such a load of expense. It is therefore most probable, that the ministry will at last justfy their policy by their dishonesty, and openly declare, that their original design was conquest: and in this case, it well

becomes the people of England to consider how far the nation would have been benefited by the success.

In a general view, there are few conquests that repay the charge of making them, and mankind are pretty well convinced that it can never be worth their while to go to war for profit's sake. If they are made war upon, their country invaded, or their existence at stake, it is their duty to defend and preserve themselves, but in every other light and from every other cause, is war inglorious and detestable. But to return to the case in question—

When conquests are made of foreign countries, it is supposed that the *commerce* and *dominion* of the country which made them are extended. But this could neither be the object nor the consequence of the present war. You enjoyed the whole commerce before. It could receive no possible addition by a conquest, but on the contrary, must diminish as the inhabitants were reduced in numbers and wealth. You had the same *dominion* over the country which you used to have, and had no complaint to make against her for breach of any part of the contract between you or her, or contending against any established custom, commercial, political or territorial. The country and commerce were both your own when you *began* to conquer, in the same manner and form as they had been your own an hundred years before. Nations have sometimes been induced to make conquests for the sake of reducing the power of their enemies, or bringing it to a balance with their own. But this could be no part of your plan. No foreign authority was claimed here, neither was any such authority suspected by you, or acknowledged or imagined by us. What then, in the name of heaven, could you go to war for? Or what chance could you possibly have in the event, but either to hold the same country which you held before, and that in a much worse condition, or to lose, with an amazing expense, what you might have retained without a farthing of charges.

War never can be the interest of a trading nation, any more than quarrelling can be profitable to a man in business. But to make war with those who trade with us, is like setting a bull-dog upon a customer at the shop-door. The least degree of common sense shows the madness of the latter, and it will apply with the same force of conviction to the former. Piratical nations, having neither commerce or commodities of their own to lose, may make war

upon all the world, and lucratively find their account in it, But it is quite otherwise with Britain. For besides the stoppage of trade in time of war, she exposes more of her own property to be lost, than she has the chance of taking from others. Some ministerial gentlemen in parliament have mentioned the greatness of her trade as an apology for the greatness of her loss. This is miserable politics indeed! Because it ought to have been given as a reason for her not engaging in a war at first. The coast of America commands the West-India trade almost as effectually as the coast of Africa does that of the Straits; and England can no more carry on the former without the consent of America, than she can the latter without a Mediterranean pass.

In whatever light the war with America is considered upon commercial principles, it is evidently the interest of the people of England not to support it; and why it has been supported so long against the clearest demonstrations of truth and national advantage, is to me, and must be to all the reasonable world, a matter of astonishment. Perhaps it may be said that I live in America, and write this from interest. To this I reply, that my principle is universal. My attachment is to all the world, and not to any particular part, and if what I advance is right, no matter where or who it comes from. We have given the proclamation of your commissioners a currency in our newspapers, and I have no doubt you will give this a place in yours. To oblige and be obliged is fair.

Before I dismiss this part of my address, I shall mention one more circumstance in which I think the people of England have been equally mistaken: and then proceed to other matters.

There is such an idea existing in the world, as that of *national honor*, and this falsely understood, is oftentimes the cause of war. In a Christian and philosophical sense, mankind seem to have stood still at individual civilization, and to retain as nations all the original rudeness of nature. Peace by treaty is only a cessation of violence for a reformation of sentiment. It is a substitute for a principle that is wanting and ever will be wanting till the idea of *national honor* be rightly understood. As individuals we profess ourselves Christians, but as nations we are heathens, Romans, and what not. I remember the late admiral Saunders declaring in the house of commons, and that in the time of peace, "That the city of Madrid laid in ashes was

not a sufficient atonement for the Spaniards taking off the rudder of an English sloop of war." I do not ask whether this is Christianity or morality, I ask whether it is decency? whether it is proper language for a nation to use? In private life we call it by the plain name of bullying, and the elevation of rank cannot alter its character. It is, I think, exceedingly easy to define what ought to be understood by national honor; for that which is the best character for an individual is the best character for a nation; and wherever the latter exceeds or falls beneath the former there is a departure from the line of true greatness.

I have thrown out this observation with a design of applying it to Great Britain. Her ideas of national honor, seem devoid of that benevolence of heart, that universal expansion of philanthropy, and that triumph over the rage of vulgar prejudice, without which man is inferior to himself, and a companion of common animals. To know whom she shall regard or dislike, she asks what country they are of, what religion they profess, and what property they enjoy. Her idea of national honor seems to consist in national insult, and that to be a great people, is to be neither a Christian, a philosopher, or a gentleman, but to threaten with the rudeness of a bear, and to devour with the ferocity of a lion. This perhaps may sound harsh and uncourtly, but it is too true, and the more is the pity.

I mention this only as her general character. But towards America she has observed no character at all; and destroyed by her conduct what she assumed in her title. She set out with the title of parent, or mother country. The association of ideas which naturally accompany this expression, are filled with every thing that is fond, tender and forbearing. They have an energy peculiar to themselves, and, overlooking the accidental attachment of common affections, apply with infinite softness to the first feelings of the heart. It is a political term which every mother can feel the force of, and every child can judge of. It needs no painting of mine to set it off, for nature only can do it justice.

But has any part of your conduct to America corresponded with the title you set up? If in your general national character you are unpolished and severe, in this you are inconsistent and unnatural, and you must have exceeding false notions of national honor, to suppose that the world can admire a want of humanity, or that national honor

depends on the violence of resentment, the inflexibility of temper, or the vengeance of execution.

I would willingly convince you, and that with as much temper as the times will suffer me to do, that as you opposed your own interest by quarrelling with us, so likewise your national honor, rightly conceived and understood, was no ways called upon to enter into a war with America; had you studied true greatness of heart, the first and fairest ornament of mankind, you would have acted directly contrary to all that you have done, and the world would have ascribed it to a generous cause; besides which, you had (though with the assistance of this country) secured a powerful name by the last war. You were known and dreaded abroad; and it would have been wise in you to have suffered the world to have slept undisturbed under that idea. It was to you a force existing without expense. It produced to you all the advantages of real power; and you were stronger through the universality of that charm, than any future fleets and armies may probably make you. Your greatness was so secured and interwoven with your silence, that you ought never to have awakened mankind, and had nothing to do but to be quiet. Had you been true politicians you would have seen all this, and continued to draw from the magic of a name, the force and authority of a nation.

Unwise as you were in breaking the charm, you were still more unwise in the manner of doing it. Sampson only told the secret, but you have performed the operation; you have shaven your own head, and wantonly thrown away the locks. America was the hair from which the charm was drawn that infatuated the world. You ought to have quarrelled with no power; but with her upon no account. You had nothing to fear from any condescension you might make. You might have humored her, even if there had been no justice in her claims, without any risk to your reputation; for Europe, fascinated by your fame, would have ascribed it to your benevolence, and America, intoxicated by the grant, would have slumbered in her fetters.

But this method of studying the progress of the passions, in order to ascertain the probable conduct of mankind, is a philosophy in politics which those who preside at St. James's have no conception of. They know no other influence than corruption, and reckon all their

probabilities from precedent. A new case is to them a new world, and while they are seeking for a parallel they get lost. The talents of lord Mansfield can be estimated at best no higher than those of a sophist. He understands the subtleties but not the elegance of nature; and by continually viewing mankind through the cold medium of the law, never thinks of penetrating into the warmer region of the mind. As for lord North, it is his happiness to have in him more philosophy than sentiment, for he bears flogging like a top and sleeps the better for it. His punishment becomes his support, for while he suffers the lash for his sins, he keeps himself up by twirling about. In politics, he is a good arithmetician, and in every thing else nothing at all.

There is one circumstance which comes so much within lord North's province as a financier, that I am surprised it should escape him, which is, the different abilities of the two countries in supporting the expense; for, strange as it may seem, England is not a match for America in this particular. By a curious kind of revolution in accounts, the people of England seem to mistake their poverty for their riches; that is, they reckon their national debt as a part of their national wealth. They make the same kind of error which a man would do, who after mortgaging his estate, should add the money borrowed, to the full value of the estate, in order to count up his worth, and in this case he would conceive that he got rich by running into debt. Just thus it is with England. The government owed at the beginning of this war one hundred and thirty-five millions sterling, and though the individuals to whom it was due, had a right to reckon their shares as so much private property, yet to the nation collectively it was so much poverty. There is as effectual limits to public debts as to private ones, for when once the money borrowed is so great as to require the whole yearly revenue to discharge the interest thereon, there is an end to further borrowing; in the same manner as when the interest of a man's debts amounts to the yearly income of his estate, there is an end to his credit. This is nearly the case with England, the interest of her present debt being at least equal to one half of her yearly revenue, so that out of ten millions annually collected by taxes, she has but five that she can call her own.

The very reverse of this was the case with America; she began the war without any debt upon her, and in order to carry it on, she neither raised money by taxes, nor borrowed it upon interest, but created it; and her situation at this time continues so much the reverse of yours that taxing would make her rich, whereas it would make you poor. When we shall have sunk the sum which we have created, we shall then be out of debt, be just as rich as when we began, and all the while we are doing it, shall feel no difference, because the value will rise as the quantity decreases.

There was not a country in the world so capable of bearing the expense of a war as America; not only because she was not in debt when she began, but because the country is young and capable of infinite improvement, and has an almost boundless tract of new lands in store; whereas England has got to her extent of age and growth, and has no unoccupied land or property in reserve. The one is like a young heir coming to a large improvable estate; the other like an old man whose chances are over, and his estate mortgaged for half its worth.

In the second number of the Crisis, which I find has been re-published in England, I endeavored to set forth the impracticability of conquering America. I stated every case, that I conceived could possibly happen, and ventured to predict its consequences. As my conclusions were drawn not artfully, but naturally, they have all proved to be true. I was upon the spot; knew the politics of America, her strength and resources, and by a train of services, the best in my power to render, was honored with the friendship of the congress, the army and the people. I considered the cause a just one. I know and feel it a just one, and under that confidence never made my own profit or loss an object. My endeavor was to have the matter well understood on both sides, and I conceived myself tendering a general service, by setting forth to the one the impossibility of being conquered, and to the other the impossibility of conquering. Most of the arguments made use of by the ministry for supporting the war, are the very arguments that ought to have been used against supporting it; and the plans, by which they thought to conquer, are the very plans in which they were sure to be defeated. They have taken every thing up at the wrong end. Their ignorance is astonishing, and were you in my situation you

would see it. They may perhaps have your confidence, but I am persuaded that they would make very indifferent members of congress. I know what England is, and what America is, and from the compound of knowledge am better enabled to judge of the issue, than what the king or any of his ministers can be.

In this number I have endeavored to show the [illegible] and disadvantages of the war. I believe many of my remarks are new. Those which are not so, I have endeavored to improve and place in a manner that may be clear and striking. Your failure is, I am persuaded, to consult your fate. America is above your reach. She is already your equal in the world, and her independence [illegible] upon your consent, nor can it be prevented by your arms. In short, you spend your substance in vain, and impoverish yourselves without a hope.

But suppose you had conquered America, what advantage, collectively or individually, [illegible] manufacturers, or conquerors, could you have looked for? This is an object you seemed never to have attended to. Listening for the sound of victory, and [illegible] phrenzy of arms, you neglected to prepare [illegible] for the consequences. You must all pay [illegible] pense; the poorest among you must [illegible] is both your right and your duty [illegible] matter. Had America been [illegible] been parcelled out in grants [illegible] no share of it would have fallen [illegible] not have been necessary [illegible] no condition to have paid the [illegible] are rich by a conveyance of the [illegible] ceased as soon as you became masters. Our [illegible] will be of no use in England, and silver and [illegible] none. In the last war you made many [illegible] were any of your taxes lessened thereby? [illegible] trary, were you not taxed to pay for the [illegible] them, and have not the same been the case [illegible]

To the parliament I wish to address myself [illegible] particular manner. They appear to have supposed themselves partners in the chace, and to have [illegible] lion from an expectation of a right in the [illegible] this it is most probable they would, [illegible] been disappointed. The case is quite [illegible] many unforeseen difficulties would [illegible]

The parliament claimed a legislative right over America, and the war originated from that pretence. But the army is supposed to belong to the crown, and if America had been conquered through their means, the claim of the legislature would have been suffocated in the conquest. Ceded or conquered countries are supposed to be out of the authority of parliament. Taxation is exercised over them by prerogative and not by law. It was attempted to be done in the Grenades a few years ago, and the only reason why it was not done was because the crown had made a prior relinquishment of its claim. Therefore, parliament have been all this while supporting measures for the establishment of their authority, in the issue of which, they would have been triumphed over by the prerogative. This might have opened a new and interesting opposition between the parliament and the crown. The crown would have said that it conquered for itself, and that to conquer for parliament was an unknown case. The parliament might have replied, that America not being a foreign country, but a country in rebellion, could not be said to be conquered, but reduced; and thus continued their claim by disowning the term. The crown might have rejoined, that however America might be considered at first, she became foreign at last by a declaration of independence and a treaty with France; and that her case being, by that treaty, put within the law of nations, was out of the law of parliament, who might have maintained, that as their claim over America had never been surrendered, so neither could it be taken away. The crown might have insisted, that though the claim of parliament could not be taken away, yet being an inferior it might be superseded; and that, whether the claim was withdrawn from the object, or the object taken from the claim, the same separation ensued; and that America being subdued after a treaty with France, was to all intents and purposes a regal conquest, and of course the sole property of the king. The parliament, as the legal delegates of the people, might have contended against the term "inferior," and rested the case upon the antiquity of power, and this would have brought on a set of very interesting and rational questions.

1st, What is the original fountain of power and honor in any country?

2d, Whether the prerogative does not belong to the people?

3d, Whether there is any such thing as the English constitution?

4th, Of what use is the crown to the people?

5th, Whether he who invented a crown was not an enemy to mankind?

6th, Whether it is not a shame for a man to spend a million a year and do no good for it, and whether the money might not be better applied?

7th, Whether such a man is not better dead than alive?

8th, Whether a congress, constituted like that of America, is not the most happy and consistent form of government in the world?—With a number of others of the same import.

In short, the contention about the dividend might have distracted the nation; for nothing is more common than to agree in the conquest and quarrel for the prize; therefore it is, perhaps, a happy circumstance, that our successes have prevented the dispute.

If the parliament had been thrown out in their claim, which it is most probable they would, the nation likewise would have been thrown out in their expectation; for as the taxes would have been laid on by the crown without the parliament, the revenue arising therefrom, if any could have arisen, would not have gone into the exchequer, but into the privy purse, and so far from lessening the taxes, would not even have been added to them, but served only as pocket money to the crown. The more I reflect on this matter the more I am astonished at the blindness and ill policy of my countrymen, whose wisdom seems to operate without discernment, and their strength without an object.

To the great bulwark of the nation, I mean the mercantile and manufacturing part thereof, I likewise present my address. It is your interest to see America an independent, and not a conquered country. If conquered, she is ruined; and if ruined, poor; consequently the trade will be a trifle, and her credit doubtful. If independent, she flourishes, and from her flourishing must your profits arise. It matters nothing to you who governs America, if your manufactures find a consumption there. Some articles will consequently be obtained from other places, and it is right that they should; but the demand for others will increase, by the great influx of inhabitants which a state of independence and peace will occasion, and in the final event you may be enriched. The commerce of America

is perfectly free, and ever will be so. She will consign away no part of it to any nation. She has not to her friends, and certainly will not to her enemies, though it is probable that your narrow-minded politicians, thinking to please you thereby, may some time or other unnecessarily make such a proposal. Trade flourishes best when it is free, and it is weak policy to attempt to fetter it. Her treaty with France is on the most liberal and generous principles, and the French, in their conduct towards her, have proved themselves to be philosophers, politicians, and gentlemen.

To the ministry I likewise address myself. You, gentlemen, have studied the ruin of your country, from which it is not within your abilities to rescue her. Your attempts to recover her are as ridiculous as your plans which involved her are detestable. The commissioners being about to depart, will probably bring you this, and with it my sixth number, addressed to them; and in so doing they carry back more *Common Sense* than they brought, and you likewise will have more than when you sent them.

Having thus addressed you severally, I conclude by addressing you collectively. It is a long lane that has no turning. A period of sixteen years of misconduct and misfortune, is certainly long enough for any one nation to suffer under; and upon a supposition that war is not declared between France and you, I beg to place a line of conduct before you that will easily lead you out of all your troubles. It has been hinted before, and cannot be too much attended to.

Suppose America had remained unknown to Europe till the present year, and that Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, in another voyage round the world, had made the first discovery of her, in the same condition that she is now in, of arts, arms, numbers, and civilization. What, I ask, in that case, would have been your conduct towards her? For *that* will point out what it ought to be now. The problems and their solutions are equal, and the right line of the one is the parallel of the other. The question takes in every circumstance that can possibly arise. It reduces politics to a simple thought, and is moreover a mode of investigation, in which, while you are studying your interest, the simplicity of the case will cheat you into good temper. You have nothing to do but to suppose that you have found America, and she appears found to your hand, and while

in the joy of your heart you stand still to admire her, the path of politics rises straight before you.

Were I disposed to paint a contrast, I could easily set off what you have done in the present case, against what you would have done in *that* case, and by justly opposing them, conclude a picture that would make you blush. But, as when any of the prouder passions are hurt, it is much better philosophy to let a man slip into a good temper than to attack him in a bad one; for that reason, therefore, I only state the case, and leave you to reflect upon it.

To go a little back into politics, it will be found that the true interest of Britain lay in proposing and promoting the independence of America immediately after the last peace; for the expense which Britain had then incurred by defending America as her own dominions, ought to have shown her the policy and necessity of changing the *style* of the country, as the best probable method of preventing future wars and expense, and the only method by which she could hold the commerce without the charge of sovereignty. Besides which, the title which she assumed, of parent country, led to, and pointed out, the propriety, wisdom and advantage of a separation; for, as in private life, children grow into men, and by setting up for themselves, extend and secure the interest of the whole family, so in the settlement of colonies large enough to admit of maturity, the same policy should be pursued, and the same consequences would follow. Nothing hurts the affections both of parents and children so much, as living too closely connected, and keeping up the distinction too long. Domineering will not do over those, who, by a progress in life, have become equal in rank to their parents, that is, when they have families of their own; and though they may conceive themselves the subjects of their advice, will not suppose them the objects of their government. I do not, by drawing this parallel, mean to admit the title of *parent country*, because, if it is due any where, it is due to Europe collectively, and the first settlers from England were driven here by persecution. I mean only to introduce the term for the sake of policy, and to show from your title the line of your interest.

When you saw the state of strength and opulence, and that by her own industry, which America had arrived at, you ought to have advised her to set up for herself, and proposed an alliance of interest with her, and in so doing you

would have drawn, and that at her own expense, more real advantage, and more military supplies and assistance, both of ships and men, than from any weak and wrangling government that you could exercise over her. In short, had you studied only the domestic politics of a family, you would have learned how to govern the state; but, instead of this easy and natural line, you flew out into every thing which was wild and outrageous, till by following the passion and stupidity of the pilot, you wrecked the vessel within sight of the shore.

Having shown what you ought to have done, I now proceed to show why it was not done. The caterpillar circle of the court, had an interest to pursue, distinct from, and opposed to, yours, for though by the independence of America and an alliance therewith, the trade would have continued, if not increased, as in many articles neither country can go to a better market, and though by defending and protecting herself, she would have been no expense to you, and consequently your national charges would have decreased, and your taxes might have been proportionably lessened thereby; yet the striking off so many places from the court calendar was put in opposition to the interest of the nation. The loss of thirteen government ships, with their appendages, here and in England, is a shocking sound in the ear of a hungry courtier. Your present king and ministry will be the ruin of you; and you had better risk a revolution and call a congress, than be thus led on from madness to despair, and from despair to ruin. America has set you the example, and you may follow it and be free.

I now come to the last part, a war with France. This is what no man in his senses will advise you to, and all good men would wish to prevent. Whether France will declare war against you, is not for me in this place to mention, or to hint, even if I knew it; but it must be madness in you to do it first. The matter is come now to a full crisis and peace is easy if willingly set about. Whatever you may think, France has behaved handsomely to you. She would have been unjust to herself to have acted otherwise than she did; and having accepted our offer of alliance she gave you genteel notice of it. There was nothing in her conduct reserved or indelicate, and while she announced her determination to support her treaty, she left you to give the first offence. America, on her part, has exhibited a

character of firmness to the world. Unprepared and unarmed, without form or government, she singly opposed a nation that domineered over half the globe. The greatness of the deed demands respect; and though you may feel resentment, you are compelled both to wonder and admire.

Here I rest my arguments and finish my address. Such as it is, it is a gift and you are welcome. It was always my design to dedicate a *Crisis* to you, when the time should come that would properly *make it a Crisis;* and when likewise, I should catch myself in a temper to write it, and suppose you in a condition to read it. *That* time is now arrived, and with it the opportunity of conveyance. For the commissioners—*poor commissioners!* having proclaimed, that "*yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,*" have waited out the date, and discontented with their God, are returning to their gourd. And all the harm I wish them is, that it may not *wither* about their ears, and that they may not make their exit in the belly of a whale.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Nov. 21, 1778.

P. S. Though in the tranquillity of my mind I have concluded with a laugh, yet I have something to mention to the *commissioners*, which to them is serious and worthy their attention. Their authority is derived from an act of parliament, which likewise describes and *limits* their *official* powers. Their commission, therefore, is only a recital, and personal investiture, of those powers, or a nomination and description of the persons who are to execute them. Had it contained any thing contrary to, or gone beyond the line of, the written law from which it is derived, and by which it is bound, it would, by the English constitution, have been treason in the crown, and the king been subject to an impeachment. He dared not, therefore, put in his commission what you have put in your proclamation, that is, he dared not have authorised you in that commission to burn and destroy any thing in America. You are both in the *act* and in the *commission* styled *commissioners for restoring peace*, and the methods for doing it are there pointed out. Your last proclamation is signed by you as commissioners *under that act.* You make parliament the patron of its contents. Yet in the body of it, you insert matters contrary both to the spirit and letter of the act, and what likewise your king

dared not have put in his commission to you. The state of things in England, gentlemen, is too ticklish for you to run hazards. You are *accountable to parliament for the execution of that act according to the letter of it.* Your heads may pay for breaking it, for you certainly have broke it by exceeding it. And as a friend, who would wish you to escape the paw of the lion, as well as the belly of the whale, I civilly hint to you, *to keep within compass.*

Sir Harry Clinton, strictly speaking, is as accountable as the rest; for though a general, he is likewise a commissioner, acting under a superior authority. His first obedience is due to the act; and his plea of being a general will not and cannot clear him as a commissioner, for that would suppose the crown, in its single capacity, to have a power of dispensing with an act of parliament. Your situation, gentlemen, is nice and critical, and the more so because England is unsettled. Take heed! Remember the times of Charles the first! For Laud and Stafford fell by trusting to a hope like yours.

Having thus shown you the danger of your proclamation, I now show you the folly of it. The means contradict your design; you threaten to lay waste in order to render America a useless acquisition of alliance to France. I reply, that the more destruction you commit (if you could do it) the more valuable to France you make that alliance. You can destroy only houses and goods; and by so doing you increase our demand upon her for materials and merchandize; for the wants of one nation, provided it has *freedom* and *credit*, naturally produces riches to the other; and as you can neither ruin the land nor prevent the vegetation, you would increase the exportation of our produce in payment, which would be to her a new fund of wealth. In short, had you cast about for a plan on purpose to enrich your enemies you could not have hit upon a better.

C. S.

THE CRISIS.

NO. VIII.

ADDRESSED TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

"TRUSTING (says the king of England in his speech of November last,) in the divine providence, and in the justice of my cause, I am firmly resolved to prosecute the war with vigor, and to make every exertion in order to compel our enemies to equitable terms of peace and accommodation." To this declaration the United States of America, and the confederated powers of Europe will reply, *if Britain will have war, she shall have enough of it.*

Five years have nearly elapsed since the commencement of hostilities, and every campaign, by a gradual decay, has lessened your ability to conquer, without producing a serious thought on your condition or your fate. Like a prodigal lingering in an habitual consumption, you feel the relics of life, and mistake them for recovery. New schemes, like new medicines, have administered fresh hopes and prolonged the disease instead of curing it. A change of generals, like a change of physicians, served only to keep the flattery alive, and furnish new pretences for new extravagance.

"*Can Britain fail?*"* Has been proudly asked at the undertaking of every enterprize, and that "*whatever she wills is fate,*"† has been given with the solemnity of prophetic confidence, and though the question has been constantly replied to by disappointment, and the prediction falsified by misfortune, yet still the insult continued, and your catalogue of national evils increased therewith. Eager to persuade

* Whitehead's new-year's ode for 1776.

† Ode at the installation of Lord North, for Chancellor of the university of Oxford.

the world of her power, she considered destruction as the minister of greatness, and conceived that the glory of a nation like that of an Indian, lay in the number of its scalps and the miseries which it inflicts.

Fire, sword and want, as far as the arms of Britain could extend them, have been spread with wanton cruelty along the coast of America; and while you, remote from the scene of suffering, had nothing to lose and as little to dread, the information reached you like a tale of antiquity, in which the distance of time defaces the conception, and changes the severest sorrows into conversable amusement.

This makes the second paper, addressed perhaps in vain, to the people of England. That advice should be taken wherever example has failed; or precept be regarded where warning is ridiculed, is like a picture of hope resting on despair: but when time shall stamp with universal currency, the facts you have long encountered with a laugh, and the irresistible evidence of accumulated losses, like the hand writing on the wall, shall add terror to distress, you will then, in a conflict of suffering learn to sympathize with others by feeling for yourselves.

The triumphant appearance of the combined fleets in the channel and at your harbor's mouth, and the expedition of captain Paul Jones, on the western and eastern coast of England and Scotland, will, by placing you in the condition of an endangered country, read to you a stronger lecture on the calamities of invasion, and bring to your minds a truer picture of promiscuous distress, than the most finished rhetoric can describe or the keenest imagination conceive.

Hitherto you have experienced the expenses, but nothing of the miseries of war. Your disappointments have been accompanied with no immediate suffering, and your losses came to you only by intelligence. Like fire at a distance you heard not even the cry; you felt not the danger, you saw not the confusion. To you every thing has been foreign but the taxes to support it. You knew not what it was to be alarmed at midnight with an armed enemy in the streets. You were strangers to the distressing scene of a family in flight, and to the thousand restless cares and tender sorrows that incessantly arose. To see women and children wandering in the severity of winter, with the broken remains of a well furnished house, and seeking shelter in every crib and hut, were matters that you had no

conception of. You knew not what it was to stand by and see your goods chopped for fuel, and your beds ripped to pieces to make packages for plunder. The misery of others, like a tempestuous night, added to the pleasures of your own security. You even enjoyed the storm, by contemplating the difference of conditions and that which carried sorrow into the breasts of thousands, served but to heighten in you a species of tranquil pride.—Yet these are but the fainter sufferings of war, when compared with carnage and slaughter, the miseries of a military hospital, or a town in flames.

The people of America by anticipating distress had fortified their minds against every species you could inflict. They had resolved to abandon their homes, to resign them to destruction, and to seek new settlements rather than submit. Thus familiarized to misfortune, before it arrived, they bore their portion with the less regret: the justness of their cause was a continual source of consolation, and the hope of final victory, which never left them, served to lighten the load and sweeten the cup allotted them to drink.

But when their troubles shall become yours, and invasion be transferred upon the invaders, you will have neither their extended wilderness to fly to, their cause to comfort you, nor their hope to rest upon. Distress with them was sharpened by no self-reflection. They had not brought it on themselves. On the contrary, they had by every proceeding endeavored to avoid it, and had descended even below the mark of congressional character, to prevent a war. The national honor or the advantages of independence were matters, which at the commencement of the dispute, they had never studied, and it was only at the last moment that the measure was resolved on. Thus circumstanced, they naturally and conscientiously felt a dependance upon providence. They had a clear pretension to it, and had they failed therein, infidelity had gained a triumph.

But your condition is the reverse of theirs. Every thing you suffer you have sought: nay, had you created mischiefs on purpose to inherit them, you could not have secured your title by a firmer deed. The world awakens with no pity at your complaints. You felt none for others; you deserve none for yourselves. Nature does not interest herself in cases like yours, but on the contrary turns from them with dislike and abandons them to punishment. You may now present memorials to what court you please, but

so far as America is the object, none will listen. The policy of Europe and the propensity there in every mind to curb insulting ambition, and bring cruelty to judgment, are unitedly against you; and where nature and interest reinforce each other, the compact is too intimate to be dissolved.

Make but the case of others your own, and your own theirs, and you will then have a clear idea of the whole. Had France acted towards her colonies as you have done, you would have branded her with every epithet of abhorrence; and had you like her, stepped in to succor a struggling people, all Europe must have echoed with your own applauses. But entangled in the passion of dispute, you see it not as you ought, and form opinions thereon which suit with no interest but your own. You wonder that America does not rise in union with you to impose on herself a portion of your taxes and reduce herself to unconditional submission. You are amazed that the southern powers of Europe do not assist you in conquering a country which is afterwards to be turned against themselves; and that the northern ones do not contribute to reinstate you in America who already enjoy the market for naval stores by the separation. You seem surprised that Holland does not pour in her succors, to maintain you mistress of the seas, when her own commerce is suffering by your act of navigation; or that any country should study her own interest while yours is on the carpet.

Such excesses of passionate folly, and unjust as well as unwise resentment, have driven you on, like Pharaoh, to unpitied miseries, and while the importance of the quarrel shall perpetuate your disgrace, the flag of America will carry it round the world. The natural feelings of every rational being will be against you, and wherever the story shall be told, you will have neither excuse nor consolation left. With an unsparing hand and an insatiable mind, you have desolated the world, to gain dominion and to lose it; and while in a phrenzy of avarice and ambition, the east and the west are doomed to tributary bondage, you rapidly earned destruction as the wages of a nation.

At the thoughts of a war at home, every man amongst you ought to tremble. The prospect is far more dreadful there than in America. Here the party that was against the measures of the continent were in general composed of a kind of neutrals, who added strength to neither army.

There does not exist a being so devoid of sense and sentinent as to covet "*unconditional submission*," and therefore no man in America could be with you in principle. Several might from a cowardice of mind, *prefer* it to the hardships and dangers of *opposing* it; but the same disposition that gave them such a choice unfitted them to act either for or against us. But England is rent into parties, with equal shares of resolution. The principle which produced the war divides the nation. Their animosities are in the highest state of fermentation, and both sides, by a call of the militia, are in arms. No human foresight can discern, no conclusion can be formed, what turn a war might take, if once set on foot by an invasion. She is not now in a fit disposition, to make a common cause of her own affairs, and having no conquests to hope for abroad, and nothing but expenses arising at home, her every thing is staked upon a defensive combat, and the further she goes the worse she is off.

There are situations that a nation may be in, in which peace or war, abstracted from every other consideration, may be politically right or wrong. When nothing can be lost by a war, but what must be lost without it, war is then the policy of that country; and such was the situation of America at the commencement of hostilities: but when no security can be gained by a war, but what may be accomplished by a peace, the case becomes reversed, and such now is the situation of England.

That America is beyond the reach of conquest, is a fact which experience has shown and time confirmed, and this admitted, what, I ask, is now the object of contention? If there be any honor in pursuing self-destruction with inflexible passion—if national suicide be the perfection of national glory, you may, with all the pride of criminal happiness, expire unenvied and unrivalled. But when the tumult of war shall cease, and the tempest of present passions be succeeded by calm reflection, or when those, who, surviving its fury, shall inherit from you a legacy of debts and misfortunes, when the yearly revenue shall scarcely be able to discharge the interest of the one, and no possible remedy be left for the other, ideas, far different from the present, will arise, and embitter the remembrance of former follies. A mind disarmed of its rage, feels no pleasure in contemplating a frantic quarrel. Sickness of

thought, the sure consequence of conduct like yours, leaves no ability for enjoyment, no relish for resentment; and though, like a man in a fit, you feel not the injury of the struggle, nor distinguish between strength and disease, the weakness will nevertheless be proportioned to the violence, and the sense of pain increase with the recovery.

To what persons or to whose system of politics you owe your present state of wretchedness, is a matter of total indifference to America. They have contributed, however unwillingly, to set her above themselves, and she in the tranquillity of conquest resigns the inquiry. The case now is not so properly, who began the war, as who continues it. That there are men in all countries to whom a state of war is a mine of wealth, is a fact never to be doubted. Characters like these naturally breed in the putrefaction of distempered times, and after fattening on the disease, they perish with it, or, impregnated with the stench, retreat into obscurity.

But there are several erroneous notions to which you likewise owe a share of your misfortunes, and which if continued will only increase your trouble and your losses. An opinion hangs about the gentlemen of the minority, that America would relish measures under *their* administration, which she would not from the present cabinet. On this rock lord Chatham would have split had he gained the helm, and several of his survivors are steering the same course. Such distinctions in the infancy of the argument had some degree of foundation, but they now serve no other purpose than to lengthen out a war, in which the limits of a dispute, being fixed by the fate of arms, and guaranteed by treaties, are not to be changed or altered by trivial circumstances.

The ministry and many of the minority sacrifice their time in disputing on a question with which they have nothing to do, namely, whether America shall be independent or not? Whereas the only question that can come under their determination is, whether they will accede to it or not? They confound a military question with a political one, and undertake to supply by a vote what they lost by a battle. Say, she shall not be independent, and it will signify as much as if they voted against a decree of fate, or say that she shall, and she will be no more independent than before. Questions, which when determined,

cannot be executed, serve only to show the folly of dispute and the weakness of disputants.

From a long habit of calling America your own, you suppose her governed by the same prejudices and conceits which govern yourselves. Because you have set up a particular denomination of religion to the exclusion of all others, you imagine she must do the same, and because you, with an unsociable narrowness of mind, have cherished enmity against France and Spain, you suppose her alliance must be defective in friendship. Copying her notions of the world from you, she formerly thought as you instructed, but now feeling herself free, and the prejudice removed, she thinks and acts upon a different system. It frequently happens that in proportion as we are taught to dislike persons and countries, not knowing why, we feel an ardor of esteem upon the removal of the mistake: it seems as if something was to be made amends for, and we eagerly give into every office of friendship, to atone for the injury of the error.

But perhaps there is something in the extent of countries, which, among the generality of people, insensibly communicates extension of the mind. The soul of an islander, in its native state, seems bounded by the foggy confines of the water's edge, and all beyond affords to him matters only for profit or curiosity, not for friendship. His island is to him his world, and fixed to that, his every thing centres in it; while those, who are inhabitants of a continent, by casting their eye over a larger field, take in likewise a larger intellectual circuit, and thus approaching nearer to an acquaintance with the universe, their atmosphere of thought is extended, and their liberality fills a wider space. In short, our minds seem to be measured by countries when we are men, as they are by places, when we are children, and until something happens to disentangle us from the prejudice, we serve under it without perceiving it.

In addition to this, it may be remarked, that men who study any universal science, the principles of which are universally known, or admitted, and applied without distinction to the common benefit of all countries, obtain thereby a larger share of philanthropy than those who only study national arts and improvements. Natural philosophy, mathematics and astronomy, carry the mind from

the country to the creation, and give it a fitness suit
the extent. It was not Newton's honor, neither co
be his pride, that he was an Englishman, but that he
a philosopher: the heavens had liberated him fro
prejudices of an island, and science had expanded his
as boundless as his studies.

COMMON SE

Philadelphia, March, 1780.

THE CRISIS.

NO. IX.

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HAD America pursued her advantages with half the spirit that she resisted her misfortunes, she would before now have been a conquering and a peaceful people; but lulled in the lap of soft tranquillity, she rested on her hopes, and adversity only has convulsed her into action. Whether subtlety or sincerity, at the close of the last year, induced the enemy to an appearance for peace, is a point not material to know: it is sufficient that we see the effects it has had on our politics, and that we sternly rise to resent the delusion.

The war, on the part of America, has been a war of natural feelings. Brave in distress; serene in conquest; drowsy while at rest; and in every situation generously disposed to peace. A dangerous calm, and a most heightened zeal, have, as circumstances varied, succeeded each other. Every passion, but that of despair, has been called to a tour of duty; and so mistaken has been the enemy, of our abilities and disposition, that when she supposed us conquered, we rose the conquerors. The extensiveness of the United States, and the variety of their resources; the universality of their cause, the quick operation of their feelings, and the similarity of their sentiments, have, in every trying situation, produced a *something*, which, favored by providence, and pursued with ardor, has accomplished in an instant the business of a campaign. We have never deliberately sought victory, but snatched it; and bravely undone in an hour, the blotted operations of a season.

The reported fate of Charleston, like the misfortunes of 1776, has at last called forth a spirit, and kindled up a flame, which perhaps no other event could have produced.

If the enemy has circulated a falsehood, they have unwisely aggravated us into life, and if they have told us a truth, they have unintentionally done us a service. We were returning with folded arms from the fatigues of war, and thinking and sitting leisurely down to enjoy repose. The dependance that has been put upon Charleston threw a drowsiness over America. We looked on the business done—the conflict over—the matter settled—or, that all which remained unfinished would follow of itself. In this state of dangerous relaxation, exposed to the poisonous infusions of the enemy, and having no common danger to attract our attention, we were extinguishing, by stages, the ardor we began with, and surrendering by piece-meals the virtue that defended us.

Afflicting as the loss of Charleston may be, yet if it universally rouse us from the slumber of twelve months past, and renew in us the spirit of former days, it will produce an advantage more important than its loss. America ever *is* what she *thinks* herself to be. Governed by sentiment, and acting her own mind, she becomes, as she pleases, the victor or the victim.

It is not the conquest of towns, nor the accidental capture of garrisons, that can reduce a country so extensive as this. The sufferings of one part can never be relieved by the exertions of another, and there is no situation the enemy can be placed in, that does not afford to us the same advantages which he seeks himself. By dividing his force, he leaves every post attackable. It is a mode of war that carries with it a confession of weakness, and goes on the principle of distress, rather than conquest.

The decline of the enemy is visible not only in their operations, but in their plans; Charleston originally made but a secondary object in the system of attack, and it is now become their principal one, because they have not been able to succeed elsewhere. It would have carried a cowardly appearance in Europe had they formed their grand expedition in 1776, against a part of the continent where there was no army, or not a sufficient one to oppose them; but failing year after year in their impressions here, and to the eastward and northward, they deserted their first capital design, and prudently contenting themselves with what they can get, give a flourish of honor to conceal disgrace.

But this piece-meal work is not conquering the continent. It is a discredit in them to attempt it, and in us to suffer it. It is now full time to put an end to a war of aggravations, which, on one side, has no possible object, and on the other, has every inducement which honor, interest, safety and happiness can inspire. If we suffer them much longer to remain among us, we shall become as bad as themselves. An association of vices will reduce us more than the sword. A nation hardened in the practice of iniquity knows better how to profit by it, than a young country newly corrupted. We are not a match for them in the line of advantageous guilt, nor they for us on the principles which we bravely set out with. Our first days were our days of honor. They have marked the character of America wherever the story of her wars are told; and convinced of this, we have nothing to do, but wisely and unitedly to tread the well known track. The progress of a war is often as ruinous to individuals, as the issue of it is to a nation; and it is not only necessary that our forces be such, that we be conquerors in the end, but that by timely exertions we be secure in the interim. The present campaign will afford an opportunity which has never presented itself before, and the preparations for it are equally necessary, whether Charleston stand or fall. Suppose the first, it is in that case only a failure of the enemy, not a defeat. All the conquest that a besieged town can hope for, is, not to be conquered; and compelling an enemy to raise the seige, is to the besieged a victory. But there must be a probability amounting almost to certainty, that would justify a garrison marching out to attack a retreat. Therefore should Charleston not be taken, and the enemy abandon the seige, every other part of the continent should prepare to meet them; and on the contrary, should it be taken, the same preparations are necessary to balance the loss, and put ourselves in a condition to co-operate with our allies, immediately on their arrival.

We are not now fighting our battles alone, as we were in 1776; England from a malicious disposition to America, has not only not declared war against France and Spain, but the better to prosecute her passions here, has afforded those powers no military object, and avoids them, to distress us. She will suffer her West-India islands to be overrun by France, and her southern settlements to be taken by Spain, rather than quit the object that gratifies

her revenge. This conduct, on the part of Britain, has pointed out the propriety of France sending a naval and land force to co-operate with America on the spot. Their arrival cannot be very distant, nor the ravages of the enemy long. The recruiting the army, and procuring the supplies, are the two things most necessary to be accomplished, and a capture of either of the enemy's divisions will restore to America peace and plenty.

At a crisis, big, like the present, with expectation and events, the whole country is called to unanimity and exertion. Not an ability ought now to sleep, that can produce but a mite to the general good, nor even a whisper to pass that militates against it. The necessity of the case, and the importance of the consequences, admit no delay from a friend, no apology from an enemy. To spare now, would be the height of extravagance, and to consult present ease, would be to sacrifice it, perhaps for ever.

America, rich in patriotism and produce, can want neither men nor supplies, when a serious necessity calls them forth. The slow operation of taxes, owing to the extensiveness of collection, and their depreciated value before they arrived in the treasury, have, in many instances thrown a burden upon government, which has been artfully interpreted by the enemy into a general decline throughout the country. Yet this, inconvenient as it may at first appear, is not only remediable, but may be turned to an immediate advantage; for it makes no real difference, whether a certain number of men, or company of militia (and in this country every man is a militia-man) are directed by law to send a recruit at their own expense, or whether a tax is laid on them for that purpose, and the man hired by government afterwards. The first, if there is any difference, is both cheapest and best, because it saves the expense which would attend collecting it as a tax, and brings the man sooner into the field than the modes of recruiting formerly used: and on this principle, a law has been passed in this state for recruiting two men from each company of militia, which will add upwards of a thousand to the force of the country.

But the flame which has broke forth in this city since the report from New-York, of the loss of Charleston, not only does honor to the place, but, like the blaze of 1776, will kindle into action the scattered sparks throughout America. The valor of a country may be learned by the bravery

of its soldiery, and the general cast of its inhabitants, but confidence of success is best discovered by the active measures pursued by men of property; and when the spirit of enterprise becomes so universal as to act at once on all ranks of men, a war may then and not till then, be styled truly popular.

In 1776, the ardor of the enterprising part was considerably checked by the real revolt of some, and the coolness of others. But in the present case there is a firmness in the substance and property of the country to the public cause. An association has been entered into by the merchants, tradesmen and principal inhabitants of this city, to receive and support the new state money at the value of gold and silver; a measure which, while it does them honor, will likewise contribute to their interest, by rendering the operations of the campaign convenient and effectual.

Nor has the spirit of exertion stopped here. A voluntary subscription is likewise began, to raise a fund of hard money, to be given as bounties to fill up the full quota of the Pennsylvania line. It has been the remark of the enemy, that every thing in America has been done by the force of government; but when she sees individuals throwing in their voluntary aid, and facilitating the public measures in concert with the established powers of the country, it will convince her that the cause of America stands not on the will of a few, but on the broad foundation of property and popularity.

Thus aided and thus supported, disaffection will decline, and the withered head of tyranny expire in America. The ravages of the enemy will be short and limited, and like all their former ones, will produce a victory over themselves.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, June 9, 1780.

☞ At the time of writing this number of the Crisis, the loss of Charleston, though believed by some, was more confidently disbelieved by others. But there ought to be no longer a doubt upon the matter. Charleston is gone, and I believe for the want of a sufficient supply of provisions. The man that does not now feel for the honor of the best and the noblest cause that ever a country engaged in, and exert himself accordingly, is no longer worthy of a peaceable residence among a people determined to be free.

C. S.

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our pence per head, men, women, and children.
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taking it up on the simple ground of interest, I
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Britain was to conquer America, and, as a con-
to lay her under no other conditions than to
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and govern it ourselves, and only three quar-
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either whig or tory drink it cheaper than
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nd suppo there loaded with a duty,
he price and six shillings per
enalty ds sterling on any

three-pence sterling per head per annum, men, women and children; besides county taxes, taxes for the support of the poor, and a tenth of all the produce of the earth for the support of the bishops and clergy.* Nearly five millions of this sum went annually to pay the interest of the national debt contracted by former wars, and the remaining sum of six millions six hundred and forty-two thousand six hundred pounds was applied to defray the yearly expense of government, the peace establishment of the army and navy, placemen, pensioners, &c. consequently the whole of the enormous taxes being thus appropriated she had nothing to spare out of them towards defraying the expenses of the present war or any other. Yet had she not been in debt at the beginning of the war as we were not, and like us had only a land and not a naval war to carry on, her then revenue of eleven millions and an half pounds sterling would have defrayed all her annual expenses of war and government within each year.

But this not being the case with her, she is obliged to borrow about ten million pounds sterling, yearly, to prosecute the war that she is now engaged in, (this year she borrowed twelve) and lay on new taxes to discharge the interest; and allowing that the present war has cost her only fifty millions sterling, the interest thereon at five per cent. will be two millions and an half; therefore the amount

* The following is taken from Dr. Price's state of the taxes of England, p. 96, 97, 98.

An account of the money drawn from the public by taxes, annually, being the medium of three years before the year 1776.

Amount of customs in England	2,528,275l.
Amount of the excise in England	4,640,892
Land-tax at 3s.	1,300,000
Land tax at 1s. in the pound	450,000
Salt duties	218,739
Duties on stamps, cards, dice, advertisements, bonds, leases, indentures, newspapers, almanacks, &c.	280,785
Duties on houses and windows	385,369
Post office, seizures, wine licences, hackney coaches, &c.	250,000
Annual profits from lotteries	150,000
Expense of collecting the excise in England	297,337
Expense of collecting the customs in England	468,700
Interest of loans on the land tax at 4s. expenses of collection, militia, &c.	250,000
Perquisites, &c. to custom house officers, &c. supposed	250,000
Expense of collecting the salt duties in England 10 1-2 per cent.	27,000
Bounties on fish exported	18,000
Expense of collecting the duties on stamps, cards, advertisements, &c. at 5 and 1-4 per cent.	18,000
Total	11,642,655l.

of her taxes now must be fourteen millions, which on an average is no less than forty shillings sterling, per head, men, women and children, throughout the nation. Now as this expense of fifty millions was borrowed on the hopes of conquering America, and as it was avarice which first induced her to commence the war, how truly wretched and deplorable would the condition of this country be, were she, by her own remissness, to suffer an enemy of such a disposition, and so circumstanced, to reduce her to subjection.

I now proceed to the revenues of America.

I have already stated the number of souls in America to be three millions, and by a calculation that I have made, which I have every reason to believe is sufficiently correct, the whole expense of the war, and the support of the several governments, may be defrayed for two million pounds sterling annually; which, on an average, is thirteen shillings and four pence per head, men, women, and children, and the peace establishment at the end of the war, will be but three quarters of a million, or five shillings sterling per head. Now, throwing out of the question every thing of honor, principle, happiness, freedom and reputation in the world, and taking it up on the simple ground of interest, I put the following case:

Suppose Britain was to conquer America, and, as a conqueror, was to lay her under no other conditions than to pay the same proportion towards her annual revenue which the people of England pay; our share, in that case, would be six million pounds sterling yearly; can it then be a question, whether it is best to raise two millions to defend the country, and govern it ourselves, and only three quarters of a million afterwards, or pay six millions to have it conquered, and let the enemy govern it?

Can it be supposed that conquerors would choose to put themselves in a worse condition than what they granted to the conquered? In England the tax on rum is five shillings and one penny sterling per gallon, which is one silver dollar and fourteen coppers. Now would it not be laughable to imagine, that after the expense they have been at, they would let either whig or tory drink it cheaper than themselves? Coffee, which is so considerable an article of consumption and support here, is there loaded with a duty, which makes the price between five and six shillings per pound, and a penalty of fifty pounds sterling on any

person detected in roasting it in his own house. There is scarcely a necessary of life that you can eat, drink, wear, or enjoy, that is not there loaded with a tax; even the light from heaven is only permitted to shine into their dwellings by paying eighteen pence sterling per window annually; and the humblest drink of life, small beer, cannot there be purchased without a tax of nearly two coppers per gallon, besides a heavy tax upon the malt, and another on the hops before it is brewed, exclusive of a land-tax on the earth which produces them. In short, the condition of that country, in point of taxation, is so oppressive, the number of her poor so great, and the extravagance and rapaciousness of the court so enormous, that, were they to effect a conquest of America, it is then only that the distresses of America would begin. Neither would it signify any thing to a man whether he be whig or tory. The people of England and the ministry of that country know us by no such distinctions. What they want is clear, solid revenue, and the modes which they would take to procure it, would operate alike on all. Their manner of reasoning would be short, because they would naturally infer that if we were able to carry on a war of five or six years against them, we were able to pay the same taxes which they do.

I have already stated that the expense of conducting the present war, and the government of the several states, may be done for two millions sterling, and the establishment in time of peace, for three quarters of a million.*

As to navy matters, they flourish so well, and are so well attended to by individuals, that I think it consistent on every principle of real use and economy, to turn the navy into hard money (keeping only three or four packets) and apply it to the service of the army. We shall not have a ship the less; the use of them, and the benefit from them, will be greatly increased, and their expense saved. We are now allied with a formidable naval power, from whom we derive the assistance of a navy. And the line in which we can prosecute the war, so as to reduce the common enemy and benefit the alliance most effectually, will be by attending closely to the land service.

* I have made the calculations in sterling, because it is a rate generally known in all the states, and because, likewise, it admits of an easy comparison between our expenses to support the war, and those of the enemy. Four silver dollars and an half is one pound sterling, and three pence over.

I estimate the charge of keeping up and maintaining an army, officering them, and all expenses included, sufficient for the defence of the country, to be equal to the expense of forty thousand men at thirty pounds sterling per head, which is one million two hundred thousand pounds.

I likewise allow four hundred thousand pounds for continental expenses at home and abroad.

And four hundred thousand pounds for the support of the several state governments—the amount will then be,

For the army	1,200,000*l.*
Continental expenses at home and abroad	400,000
Government of the several states	400,000
Total	2,000,000*l.*

I take the proportion of this state, Pennsylvania, to be an eighth part of the thirteen United States; the quota then for us to raise will be two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling; two hundred thousand of which will be our share for the support and pay of the army and continental expenses at home and abroad, and fifty thousand pounds for the support of the state government.

In order to gain an idea of the proportion in which the raising such a sum will fall, I make the following calculation.

Pennsylvania contains three hundred and seventy-five thousand inhabitants, men, women and children; which is likewise an eighth of the number of inhabitants of the whole United States: therefore, two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling to be raised among three hundred and seventy-five thousand persons, is, on an average, thirteen shillings and four pence per head, per annum, or something more than one shilling sterling per month. And our proportion of three quarters of a million for the government of the country, in time of peace, will be ninety-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds sterling; fifty thousand of which will be for the government expenses of the state, and forty-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds for continental expenses at home and abroad.

The peace establishment then will, on an average, be five shillings sterling per head. Whereas, was England now to stop, and the war cease, her peace establishment would continue the same as it is now, *viz.* forty shillings per head; therefore was our taxes necessary for carrying

on the war as much per head as hers now is, and the difference to be only whether we should, at the end of the war, pay at the rate of five shillings per head, or forty shillings per head, the case needs no thinking of. But as we can securely defend and keep the country for one third less than what our burden would be if it was conquered, and support the governments afterwards for one eighth of what Britain would levy on us, and could I find a miser whose heart never felt the emotion of a spark of principle, even that man, uninfluenced by every love but the love of money, and capable of no attachment but to his interest, would and must, from the frugality which governs him, contribute to the defence of the country, or he ceases to be a miser and becomes an ideot. But when we take in with it every thing that can ornament mankind; when the line of our interest becomes the line of our happiness; when all that can cheer and animate the heart; when a sense of honor, fame, character, at home and abroad, are interwoven not only with the security but the increase of property, there exists not a man in America, unless he be an hired emissary, who does not see that his good is connected with keeping up a sufficient defence.

I do not imagine that an instance can be produced in the world, of a country putting herself to such an amazing charge to conquer and enslave another as Britain has done. The sum is too great for her to think of with any tolerable degree of temper; and when we consider the burden she sustains as well as the disposition she has shown, it would be the height of folly in us to suppose that she would not reimburse herself by the most rapid means, had she America once more within her power. With such an oppression of expense, what would an empty conquest be to her! What relief under such circumstances could she derive from a victory without a prize? It was money, it was revenue she first went to war for, and nothing but *that* would satisfy her. It is not the nature of avarice to be satisfied with any thing else. Every passion that acts upon mankind has a peculiar mode of operation. Many of them are temporary and fluctuating; they admit of cessation and variety. But avarice is a fixed, uniform passion. It neither abates of its vigor nor changes its object; and the reason why it does not, is founded in the nature of things, for wealth has not a rival where avarice is a ruling passion. One beauty may excel another, and extinguish

from the mind of man the pictured remembrance of a former one: but wealth is the phenix of avarice, and therefore cannot seek a new object, because there is not another in the world.

I now pass on to show the value of the present taxes, and compare them with the annual expense; but this I shall preface with a few explanatory remarks.

There are two distinct things which make the payment of taxes difficult; the one is the large and real value of the sum to be paid, and the other is the scarcity of the thing in which the payment is to be made; and although these appear to be one and the same, they are in several instances not only different, but the difficulty springs from different causes.

Suppose a tax to be laid equal to one half of what a man's yearly income is, such a tax could not be paid, because the property could not be spared; and on the other hand, suppose a very trifling tax was laid, to be collected in *pearls*, such a tax likewise could not be paid, because they could not be had. Now any person may see that these are distinct cases, and the latter of them is a representation of our own.

That the difficulty cannot proceed from the former, that is, from the real value or weight of the tax, is evident at the first view to any person who will consider it.

The amount of the quota of taxes for this state for the present year, 1780 (and so in proportion for every other state) is twenty millions of dollars, which at seventy for one is but sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds, three shillings sterling, and on an average is no more than three shillings and five pence sterling per head per annum per man, woman and child, or three pence two-fifths per head per month. Now here is a clear, positive fact, that cannot be contradicted, and which proves that the difficulty cannot be in the weight of the tax, for in itself it is a trifle and far from being adequate to our quota of the expense of the war. The quit-rents of one penny sterling per acre on only one half the state, come to upwards of fifty thousand pounds, which is almost as much as all the taxes of the present year, and as those quit-rents made no part of the taxes then paid, and are now discontinued, the quantity of money drawn for public service this year, exclusive of the militia fines, which I shall take notice of in the process of this work, is less than what was

paid and payable in any year preceding the revolution and since the last war; what I mean is, that the quit-rent and taxes taken together came to a larger sum then, than the present taxes without the quit-rents do now.

My intention by these arguments and calculations is to place the difficulty to the right cause, and show that it does not proceed from the weight or worth of the tax, but from the scarcity of the medium in which it is paid; and to illustrate this point still further, I shall now show, that if the tax of twenty millions of dollars was of four times the real value it now is, or nearly so, which would be about two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, and would be our full quota, this sum would have been raised with more ease, and have been less felt, than the present sum of only sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty pounds.

The convenience or inconvenience of paying a tax in money arises from the quantity of money that can be spared out of trade.

When the emissions stopped, the continent was left in possession of two hundred millions of dollars, perhaps as equally dispersed as it was possible for trade to do it. And as no more was to be issued, the rise or fall of prices could neither increase nor diminish the quantity. It therefore remained the same through all the fluctuations of trade and exchange.

Now had the exchange stood at twenty for one, which was the rate congress calculated upon when they arranged the quota of the states the latter end of last year, trade would have been carried on for nearly four times less money than it is now, and consequently the twenty millions would have been spared with much greater ease, and when collected would have been of almost four times the value that they now are. And on the other hand, was the depreciation to be ninety or one hundred for one, the quantity required for trade would be more than at sixty or seventy for one, and though the value of them would be less, the difficulty of sparing the money out of trade would be greater. And on these facts and arguments I rest the matter, to prove that it is not the want of property, but the scarcity of the medium by which the proportion of property for taxation is to be measured out, that makes the embarrassment which we lie under. There is not money enough and what is equally as true, the people will not let there be money enough.

le I am on the subject of the currency, I shall offer
mark which will appear true to every body, and can
ounted for by nobody, which is, that the better the
were, the worse the money grew; and the worse the
vere, the better the money stood. It never depreci-
y any advantage obtained by the enemy. The
es of 1776, and the loss of Philadelphia in 1777, made
sible impression on it, and every one knows that the
der of Charleston did not produce the least alteration
rate of exchange, which, for long before, and for
than three months after, stood at sixty for one. It
as if the certainty of its being our own, made us care-
its value, and that the most distant thoughts of los-
made us hug it the closer, like something we were
part with; or that we depreciate it for our pastime,
when called to seriousness by the enemy, we leave
renew again at our leisure. In short our good luck
to break us, and our bad makes us whole.

sing on from this digression, I shall now endeavor to
into one view the several parts which I have already
and form thereon some propositions, and conclude.

ve placed before the reader, the average tax per
aid by the people of England; which is forty shil-
terling.

I have shown the rate on an average per head, which
fray all the expenses of the war to us, and support
veral governments without running the country into
which is thirteen shillings and four pence.

ve shown what the peace establishment may be con-
l for, *viz.* an eighth part of what it would be, if under
vernment of Britain.

I have likewise shown what the average per head
present taxes are, namely, three shillings and five
sterling, or three pence two-fifths per month; and
eir whole yearly value, in sterling, is only sixty-four
nd two hundred and eighty pounds. Whereas our
to keep the payments equal with the expenses, is
undred and fifty thousand pounds. Consequently,
is a deficiency of one hundred and eighty-five thou-
even hundred and twenty pounds, and the same pro-
n of defect, according to the several quotas, happens
ry other state. And this defect is the cause why the
has been so indifferently fed, clothed and paid. It
cause, likewise, of the nerveless state of the campaign

and the insecurity of the country. Now, if a tax equal to thirteen and four pence per head, will remove all these difficulties, make people secure in their homes, leave them to follow the business of their stores and farms unmolested, and not only keep out, but drive out the enemy from the country; and if the neglect of raising this sum will let them in, and produce the evils which might be prevented—on which side, I ask, does the wisdom, interest and policy lie? Or, rather, would it not be an insult to reason, to put the question? The sum when proportioned out according to the several abilities of the people, can hurt no one, but an inroad from the enemy ruins hundreds of families.

Look at the destruction done in this city. The many houses totally destroyed, and others damaged; the waste of fences in the country round it, besides the plunder of furniture, forage and provision. I do not suppose that half a million sterling would reinstate the sufferers; and, does this, I ask, bear any proportion to the expense that would make us secure. The damage, on an average, is at least ten pounds sterling per head, which is as much as thirteen shillings and four pence per head comes to for fifteen years. The same has happened on the frontiers, and in the Jerseys, New-York, and other places where the enemy has been—Carolina and Georgia are likewise suffering the same fate.

That the people generally do not understand the insufficiency of the taxes to carry on the war, is evident, not only from common observation, but from the construction of several petitions, which were presented to the assembly of this state, against the recommendation of congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty for one, and issuing new money in its stead. The prayer of the petition was, *that the currency might be appreciated by taxes* (meaning the present taxes) *and that part of the taxes be applied to the support of the army, if the army could not be otherwise supported.* Now it could not have been possible for such a petition to have been presented, had the petitioners known, that so far from *part* of the taxes being sufficient for the support of the army, the *whole* of them falls three-fourths short of the year's expenses.

Before I proceed to propose methods by which a sufficiency of money may be raised, I shall take a short view of the general state of the country.

Notwithstanding the weight of the war, the ravages of the enemy and the obstructions she has thrown in the way of trade and commerce, so soon does a young country outgrow misfortune, that America has already surmounted many that heavily oppressed her. For the first year or two of the war, we were shut up within our ports, scarce venturing to look towards the ocean. Now our rivers are beautified with large and valuable vessels, our stores filled with merchandize, and the produce of the country has a ready market, and an advantageous price. Gold and silver, that for a while seemed to have retreated again within the bowels of the earth, have once more risen into circulation, and every day adds new strength to trade, commerce and agriculture. In a pamphlet, written by Sir John Dalrymple, and dispersed in America in the year 1775, he asserted, that, *two twenty-gun ships, nay, says he, tenders of those ships, stationed between Albemarle sound and Chesapeake bay would shut up the trade of America for* 600 *miles.* How little did Sir John Dalrymple know of the abilities of America!

While under the government of Britain, the trade of this country was loaded with restrictions. It was only a few foreign ports which we were allowed to sail to. Now it is otherwise; and allowing that the quantity of trade is but half what it was before the war, the case must show the vast advantage of an open trade, because the present quantity under her restrictions could not support itself; from which I infer, that if half the quantity without the restrictions can bear itself up nearly, if not quite, as well as the whole when subject to them, how prosperous must the condition of America be when the whole shall return open with all the world. By trade I do not mean the employment of a merchant only, but the whole interest and business of the country taken collectively.

It is not so much my intention, by this publication, to propose particular plans for raising money, as it is to show the necessity and the advantages to be derived from it. My principal design is to form the disposition of the people to the measures which I am fully persuaded it is their interest and duty to adopt, and which needs no other force to accomplish them than the force of being felt. But as every hint may be useful, I shall throw out a sketch, and leave others to make such improvements upon it as to them may appear reasonable.

The annual sum wanted is two millions, and the average rate in which it falls is thirteen shillings and four pence per head.

Suppose then that we raise half the sum and sixty thousand pounds over. The average rate thereof will be seven shillings per head.

In this case we shall have half the supply that we want and an annual fund of sixty thousand pounds whereon to borrow the other million; because sixty thousand pounds is the interest of a million at six per cent. and if at the end of another year we should be obliged, by the continuance of the war, to borrow another million, the taxes will be increased to seven shillings and six pence; and thus for every million borrowed, an additional tax, equal to six pence per head, must be levied.

The sum then to be raised next year will be one million and sixty thousand pounds: one half of which I would propose should be raised by duties on imported goods and prize goods, and the other half by a tax on landed property and houses, or such other means as each state may devise.

But as the duties on imports and prize goods must be the same in all the states, therefore the rate per cent. or what other form the duty shall be laid, must be ascertained and regulated by congress, and ingrafted in that form into the law of each state; and the monies arising therefrom carried into the treasury of each state. The duties to be paid in gold or silver.

There are many reasons why a duty on imports is the most convenient duty or tax that can be collected; one of which is, because the whole is payable in a few places in a country, and it likewise operates with the greatest ease and equality, because as every one pays in proportion to what he consumes, so people in general consume in proportion to what they can afford, and therefore the tax is regulated by the abilities which every man supposes himself to have, or in other words, every man becomes his own assessor, and pays by a little at a time when it suits him to buy. Besides, it is a tax which people may pay or let alone by not consuming the articles; and though the alternative may have no influence on their conduct, the power of choosing is an agreeable thing to the mind. For my own part, it would be a satisfaction to me, was there a duty on all sorts of liquors during the war, as in my idea of things it would be an addition to the pleasures of society, to know, that when the

health of the army goes round, a few drops from every glass become theirs. How often have I heard an emphatical wish, almost accompanied with a tear, "*Oh, that our poor fellows in the field had some of this!*" Why then need we suffer under a fruitless sympathy, when there is a way to enjoy both the wish and the entertainment at once?

But the great national policy of putting a duty upon imports is, that it either keeps the foreign trade in our own hands, or draws something for the defence of the country from every foreigner who participates it with us.

Thus much for the first half of the taxes, and as each state will best devise means to raise the other half, I shall confine my remarks to the resources of this state.

The quota, then, of this state, of one million and sixty thousand pounds, will be one hundred and thirty-three thousand two hundred and fifty pounds, the half of which is sixty-six thousand six hundred and twenty-five pounds; and supposing one fourth part of Pennsylvania inhabited, then a tax of one bushel of wheat on every twenty acres of land, one with another, would produce the sum, and all the present taxes to cease. Whereas, the tithes of the bishops and clergy in England, exclusive of the taxes, are upwards of half a bushel of wheat on *every single* acre of land, good and bad, throughout the nation.

In the former part of this paper I mentioned the militia fines, but reserved speaking to the matter, which I shall now do. The ground I shall put it upon is, that two millions sterling a year will support a sufficient army, and all the expenses of war and government, without having recourse to the inconvenient method of continually calling men from their employments, which of all others is the most expensive and the least substantial. I consider the revenues created by taxes as the first and principal thing, and fines only as secondary and accidental things. It was not the intention of the militia law to apply the fines to any thing else but the support of the militia, neither do they produce any revenue to the state, yet these fines amount to more than all the taxes: for taking the muster-roll to be sixty thousand men, the fine on forty thousand who may not attend, will be sixty thousand pounds sterling, and those who muster, will give up a portion of time equal to half that sum, and if the eight classes should be called within the year, and one third turn out, the fine on the remaining forty thousand would amount to seventy-two mil-

lions of dollars, besides the fifteen shillings on every hundred pounds of property, and the charge of seven and a half per cent. for collecting, in certain instances, which, on the whole, would be upwards of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling.

Now if those very fines disable the country from raising a sufficient revenue without producing an equivalent advantage, would it not be for the ease and interest of all parties to increase the revenue, in the manner I have proposed, or any better, if a better can be devised, and cease the operation of the fines? I would still keep the militia as an organized body of men, and should there be a real necessity to call them forth, pay them out of the proper revenues of the state, and increase the taxes a third or fourth per cent. on those who do not attend. My limits will not allow me to go further into this matter, which I shall therefore close with this remark; that fines are, of all modes of revenue, the most unsuited to the mind of a free country. When a man pays a tax, he knows that the public necessity requires it, and therefore feels a pride in discharging his duty; but a fine seems an atonement for neglect of duty, and of consequence is paid with discredit, and frequently levied with severity.

I have now only one subject more to speak of, with which I shall conclude, which is, the resolve of congress of the 18th of March last, for taking up and funding the present currency at forty for one, and issuing new money in its stead.

Every one knows that I am not the flatterer of congress, but in this instance *they are right;* and if that measure is supported, the currency will acquire a value, which without it, it will not. But this is not all: it will give relief to the finances until such time as they can be properly arranged, and save the country from being immediately double-taxed under the present mode. In short, support that measure, and it will support you.

I have now waded through a tedious course of difficult business, and over an untrodden path. The subject, on every point in which it could be viewed, was entangled with perplexities, and enveloped in obscurity, yet such are the resources of America, that she wants nothing but system to secure success.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Oct. 6, 1780.

THE CRISIS.

NO. XI.

—

ON THE KING OF ENGLAND'S SPEECH.

Of all the innocent passions which actuate the human mind, there is none more universally prevalent than curiosity. It reaches all mankind, and in matters which concern us, or concern us not, it alike provokes in us a desire to know them.

Although the situation of America, superior to every effort to enslave her, and daily rising to importance and opulence, hath placed her above the region of anxiety, it has still left her within the circle of curiosity; and her fancy to see the speech of a man who had proudly threatened to bring her to his feet, was visibly marked with that tranquil confidence which cared nothing about its contents. It was inquired after with a smile, read with a laugh, and dismissed with disdain.

But, as justice is due, even to an enemy, it is right to say, that the speech is as well managed as the embarrassed condition of their affairs could well admit of; and though hardly a line of it is true, except the mournful story of Cornwallis, it may serve to amuse the deluded commons and people of England, for whom it was calculated.

"The war," says the speech, "is still unhappily prolonged by that restless ambition which first excited our enemies to commence it, and which still continues to disappoint my earnest wishes and diligent exertions to restore the public tranquillity."

How easy it is to abuse truth and language, when men, by habitual wickedness, have learned to set justice at

defiance. That the very man who began the war, who the most sullen insolence refused to answer, and ev hear, the humblest of all petitions, who hath encour his officers and his army in the most savage cruelties, the most scandalous plunderings, who hath stirred u Indians on one side, and the negroes on the other, an voked every aid of hell in his behalf, should now, wi affected air of pity, turn the tables from himself, charge to another the wickedness that is his own, can be equalled by the baseness of the heart that spoke i

To be nobly wrong is more manly than to be meanly ri an expression I once used on a former occasion, and equally applicable now. We feel something like re for consistency even in error. We lament the virtue is debauched into a vice, but the vice that affects a v becomes the more detestable: and amongst the vario sumptions of character, which hypocrisy has taught men have practised, there is none that raises a h relish of disgust, than to see disappointed inveteracy ing itself, by the most visible falsehoods, into an ap ance of piety which it has no pretensions to.

"But I should not," continues the speech, "answe trust committed to the sovereign of a *free people*, nor a suitable return to my subjects for their constant, ze and affectionate attachment to my person, family and ernment, if I consented to sacrifice, either to my ow sire of peace, or to their temporary ease and relief, *essential rights and permanent interests*, upon the mainte and preservation of which, the future strength and s ty of this country must principally depend."

That the man whose ignorance and obstinacy fi volved and still continues the nation in the most ho and expensive of all wars, should now meanly flatter with the name of a *free people*, and make a merit crime, under the disguise of their essential rights an manent interests, is something which disgraces eve character of perverseness. Is he afraid they will sen to Hanover, or what does he fear? Why is the phant thus added to the hypocrite, and the man wh tends to govern, sunk into the humble and submissiv morialist?

What those essential rights and permanent interes on which the future strength and security of England principally *depend*, are not so much as alluded to.

are words which impress nothing but the ear, and are calculated only for the sound.

But if they have any reference to America, then do they amount to the disgraceful confession, that England, who once assumed to be her protectress, has now become her *dependant*. The British king and ministry are constantly holding up the vast importance which America is of to England, in order to allure the nation to carry on the war: now whatever ground there is for this idea, it ought to have operated as a reason for not beginning it; and therefore they support their present measures to their own disgrace, because the arguments which they now use, are a direct reflection on their former policy.

"The favorable appearance of affairs," continues the speech, "in the East-Indies and the safe arrival of the numerous commercial fleets of my kingdom must have given you satisfaction."

That things are not *quite* so bad every where as in America may be some cause of consolation, but can be none for triumph. One broken leg is better than two, but still it is not a source of joy: and let the appearance of affairs in the East-Indies be ever so favorable, they are nevertheless worse than at first, without a prospect of their ever being better. But the mournful story of Cornwallis was yet to be told, and it was necessary to give it the softest introduction possible.

"But in the course of this year," continues the speech, "my assiduous endeavors to guard the extensive dominions of my crown have not been attended with success equal to the justice and uprightness of my views."—What justice and uprightness there was in beginning a war with America, the world will judge of, and the unequalled barbarity with which it has been conducted is not to be worn from the memory by the cant of snivelling hypocrisy.

"And it is with *great concern* that I inform you that the events of war have been very unfortunate to my arms in Virginia, having ended in the loss of my forces in that province."—And *our* great concern is that they are not all served in the same manner.

"No endeavors have been wanting on my part," says the speech, "to extinguish that spirit of rebellion which our enemies have found means to foment and maintain in the colonies; and to restore to my *deluded subjects* in

America that happy and prosperous condition which they formerly derived from a due obedience to the laws."

The expression of *deluded subjects* is become so hacknied and contemptible, and the more so when we see them making prisoners of whole armies at a time, that the pride of not being laughed at would induce a man of common sense to leave it off. But the most offensive falsehood in the paragraph, is the attributing the prosperity of America to a wrong cause. It was the unremitted industry of the settlers and their descendants, the hard labor and toil of persevering fortitude that were the true causes of the prosperity of America. The former tyranny of England served to people it, and the virtue of the adventurers to improve it. Ask the man, who, with his axe hath cleared a way in the wilderness and now possesses an estate, what made him rich, and he will tell you the labor of his hands, the sweat of his brow and the blessing of heaven. Let Britain but leave America to herself and she asks no more. She has risen into greatness without the knowledge and against the will of England, and has a right to the unmolested enjoyment of her own created wealth.

"I will order," says the speech, "the estimates of the ensuing year to be laid before you. I rely on your wisdom and public spirit for such supplies as the circumstances of our affairs shall be found to require. Among the many ill consequences which attend the continuation of the present war, I most sincerely regret the additional burdens which it must unavoidably bring upon my faithful subjects."

It is strange that a nation must run through such a labyrinth of trouble, and expend such a mass of wealth to gain the wisdom which an hour's reflection might have taught. The final superiority of America over every attempt that an island might make to conquer her, was as naturally marked in the constitution of things, as the future ability of a giant over a dwarf is delineated in his features while an infant. How far providence, to accomplish purposes, which no human wisdom could foresee, permitted such extraordinary errors, is still a secret in the womb of time, and must remain so till futurity shall give it birth.

"In the prosecution of this great and important contest," says the speech, "in which we are engaged, I retain a firm confidence in the *protection of divine providence*, and a perfect conviction in the justice of my cause, and I have no

doubt, but, that by the concurrence and support of my parliament, by the valor of my fleets and armies, and by a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the faculties and resources of my people, I shall be enabled to restore the blessings of a safe and honorable peace to all my dominions."

The king of England is one of the readiest believers in the world. In the beginning of the contest he passed an act to put America out of the protection of the crown of England, and though providence, for seven years together hath put him out of *her* protection, still the man has no doubt. Like Pharaoh on the edge of the Red sea, he sees not the plunge he is making, and precipitately drives across the flood that is closing over his head.

I think it is a reasonable supposition, that this part of the speech was composed before the arrival of the news of the capture of Cornwallis: for it certainly has no relation to their condition at the time it was spoken. But, be this as it may, it is nothing to us. Our line is fixed. Our lot is cast; and America, the child of fate, is arriving at maturity. We have nothing to do but by a spirited and quick exertion, to stand prepared for war or peace. Too great to yield, and too noble to insult; superior to misfortune, and generous in success, let us untaintedly preserve the character which we have gained, and show to future ages an example of unequalled magnanimity. There is something in the cause and consequence of America that has drawn on her the attention of all mankind. The world has seen her brave. Her love of liberty; her ardor in supporting it; the justice of her claims, and the constancy of her fortitude has won her the esteem of Europe, and attached to her interest the first power in that country.

Her situation now is such, that to whatever point, past, present or to come, she casts her eyes, new matter rises to convince her that she is right. In her conduct towards her enemy, no reproachful sentiment lurks in secret. No sense of injustice is left upon the mind. Untainted with ambition, and a stranger to revenge, her progress hath been marked by providence, and she, in every stage of the conflict has blest her with success.

But let not America wrap herself up in delusive hope and suppose the business done. The least remissness in preparation, the least relaxation in execution, will only serve to prolong the war and increase expenses. If our enemies

can draw consolation from misfortune, and exert themselves upon despair, how much more ought we, who are to win a continent by the conquest, and have already an earnest of success?

Having, in the preceding part, made my remarks on the several matters which the speech contains, I shall now make my remarks on what it does not contain.

There is not a syllable in it respecting alliances. Either the injustice of Britain is too glaring, or her condition too desperate, or both, for any neighboring power to come to her support. In the beginning of the contest, when she had only America to contend with, she hired assistance from Hesse and other smaller states of Germany, and for nearly three years did America, young, raw, undisciplined and unprovided, stand against the power of Britain, aided by twenty thousand foreign troops, and made a complete conquest of one entire army. The remembrance of those things ought to inspire us with confidence and greatness of mind, and carry us through every remaining difficulty with content and cheerfulness. What are the little sufferings of the present day, compared with the hardships that are past. There was a time, when we had neither house nor home in safety; when every hour was the hour of alarm and danger; when the mind, tortured with anxiety, knew no repose, and every thing but hope and fortitude, was bidding us farewell.

It is of use to look back upon these things; to call to mind the times of trouble and the scenes of complicated anguish that are past and gone. Then every expense was cheap, compared with the dread of conquest and the misery of submission. We did not stand debating upon trifles, or contending about the necessary and unavoidable charges of defence. Every one bore his lot of suffering, and looked forward to happier days, and scenes of rest.

Perhaps one of the greatest dangers which any country can be exposed to, arises from a kind of trifling which sometimes steals upon the mind when it supposes the danger past; and this unsafe situation marks at this time the peculiar crisis of America. What would she once have given to have known that her condition at this day should be what it now is? And yet we do not seem to place a proper value upon it, nor vigorously pursue the necessary measures to secure it. We know that we cannot be defended, nor yet defend ourselves, without trouble and expense,

We have no right to expect it; neither ought we to look for it. We are a people, who, in our situation, differ from all the world. We form one common floor of public good, and, whatever is our charge, it is paid for our own interest and upon our own account.

Misfortune and experience have now taught us system and method; and the arrangements for carrying on the war are reduced to rule and order. The quotas of the several states are ascertained, and I intend in a future publication to show what they are, and the necessity as well as the advantages of vigorously providing them.

In the mean time, I shall conclude this paper with an instance of *British clemency*, from Smollett's History of England, vol. xi. p. 239, printed in London. It will serve to show how dismal the situation of a conquered people is, and that the only security is an effectual defence.

We all know that the Stuart family and the house of Hanover opposed each other for the crown of England. The Stuart family stood first in the line of succession, but the other was the most successful.

In July, 1745, Charles, the son of the exiled king landed in Scotland, collected a small force, at no time exceeding five or six thousand men, and made some attempts to re-establish his claim. The late duke of Cumberland, uncle to the present king of England, was sent against him, and on the 16th of April following, Charles was totally defeated at Culloden, in Scotland. Success and power are the only situations in which clemency can be shown, and those who are cruel, because they are victorious, can with the same facility act any other degenerate character.

"Immediately after the decisive action at Culloden, the duke of Cumberland took possession of Inverness; where six and thirty deserters, convicted by a court martial, were ordered to be executed: then he detached several parties to ravage the country. One of these apprehended the lady Mackintosh, who was sent prisoner to Inverness, plundered her house, and drove away her cattle, though her husband was actually in the service of the government. The castle of lord Lovat was destroyed. The French prisoners were sent to Carlisle and Penrith: Kilmarnock, Balmerino, Cromartie, and his son the lord Macleod, were conveyed by sea to London; and those of an inferior rank were confined in different prisons. The marquis of Tullibardine together with a brother of the

earl of Dunmore, and Murray, the pretender's secretary, were seized and transported to the tower of London, to which the earl of Traquair had been committed on suspicion; and the eldest son of lord Lovat was imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh. In a word, all the jails in Great Britain, from the capital, northwards, were filled with those unfortunate captives; and great numbers of them were crowded together in the holds of ships, where they perished in the most deplorable manner, for want of air and exercise. Some rebel chiefs escaped in two French frigates that arrived on the coast of Lochaber about the end of April, and engaged three vessels belonging to his Britannic majesty, which they obliged to retire. Others embarked on board a ship on the coast of Buchan, and were conveyed to Norway, from whence they travelled to Sweden. In the month of May, the duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands, as far as fort Augustus, where he encamped; and sent off detachments on all hands, to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waste the country with fire and sword. The castles of Glengary and Lochiel were plundered and burned; every house, hut, or habitation, met with the same fate, without distinction; and all the cattle and provision were carried off; the men were either shot upon the mountains, like wild beasts, or put to death in cold blood, without form of trial; the women, after having seen their husbands and fathers murdered, were subjected to brutal violation, and then turned out naked, with their children, to starve on the barren heaths. One whole family was enclosed in a barn, and consumed to ashes. Those ministers of vengeance were so alert in the execution of their office, that in a few days there was neither house, cottage, man, nor beast, to be seen within the compass of fifty miles; all was ruin, silence, and desolation."

I have here presented the reader with one of the most shocking instances of cruelty ever practised, and I leave it to rest on his mind, that he may be fully impressed with a sense of the destruction he has escaped, in case Britain had conquered America; and likewise, that he may see and feel the necessity, as well for his own personal safety, as for the honor, the interest, and happiness of the whole community, to omit or delay no one preparation necessary to secure the ground which we so happily stand upon.

TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA.

On the expenses, arrangements and disbursements for carrying on the war, and finishing it with honor and advantage.

When any necessity or occasion has pointed out the convenience of addressing the public, I have never made it a consideration whether the subject was popular or unpopular, but whether it was right or wrong; for that which is right will become popular, and that which is wrong, though by mistake it may obtain the cry or fashion of the day, will soon lose the power of delusion, and sink into disesteem.

A remarkable instance of this happened in the case of Silas Deane; and I mention this circumstance with the greater ease, because the poison of his hypocrisy spread over the whole country, and every man, almost without exception, thought me wrong in opposing him. The best friends I then had, except Mr. Laurens, stood at a distance, and this tribute, which is due to his constancy, I pay to him with respect, and that the readier, because he is not here to hear it. If it reaches him in his imprisonment, it will afford him an agreeable reflection.

"*As he rose like a rocket, he would fall like the stick,*" is a metaphor which I applied to Mr. Deane in the first piece which I published respecting him, and he has exactly fulfilled the description. The credit he so unjustly obtained from the public, he lost in almost as short a time. The delusion perished as it fell, and he soon saw himself stripped of popular support. His more intimate acquaintances began to doubt and to desert him long before he left America, and at his departure he saw himself the object of general suspicion. When he arrived in France, he endeavored to effect by treason what he had failed to accomplish by fraud. His plans, schemes and projects, together with his expectation of being sent to Holland to negotiate a loan of money, had all miscarried. He then began traducing and accusing America of every crime, which could injure her reputation. "That she was a ruined country; that she only meant to make a tool of France, to get what money she could out of her, and then to leave her, and accommodate with Britain." Of all which and much more, colonel Laurens and myself, when in France, informed Dr.

Franklin, who had not before heard of it. And to complete the character of a traitor, he has, by letters to this country since, some of which, in his own hand writing, are now in the possession of congress, used every expression and argument in his power, to injure the reputation of France, and to advise America to renounce her alliance, and surrender up her independence.* Thus in France, he abuses America, and in his letters to America he abuses France; and is endeavoring to create disunion between the two countries, by the same arts of double-dealing by which he caused dissentions among the commissioners in Paris, and distractions in America. But his life has been fraud, and his character is that of a plodding, plotting, cringing mercenary, capable of any disguise that suited his purpose. His final detection has very happily cleared up those mistakes, and removed that uneasiness, which his unprincipled conduct occasioned. Every one now sees him in the same light; for towards friends or enemies he acted with the same deception and injustice, and his name, like that of *Arnold*, ought now to be forgotten among us. As this is the first time that I have mentioned him since my return from France, it is my intention that it shall be the last. From this digression, which for several reasons I thought necessary to give, I now proceed to the purport of my address.

I consider the war of America against Britain as the country's war, the public's war, or the war of the people in their own behalf, for the security of their natural rights, and the protection of their own property. It is not the war of congress, the war of the assemblies, or the war of government, in any line whatever. The country first, by a mutual compact, resolved to defend their rights and maintain their independence, *at the hazard of their lives and fortunes*. They elected their representatives, by whom they appointed their members of congress, and said, *act you for us, and we will support you*. This is the true ground and principle of the war on the part of America and, consequently, there remains nothing to do, but for every one to fulfil his obligation.

* Mr. William Marshall, of this city, formerly a pilot, who had been taken at sea and carried to England, and got from thence to France, brought over letters from Mr. Deane to America, one of which was directed to "Robert Morris, Esq." Mr. Morris sent it unopened to congress, and advised Mr. Marshall to deliver the others there, which he did. The letters were of the same purport with those which have been already published under the signature of S. Deane, to which they had frequent reference.

It was next to impossible that a new country, engaged in a new undertaking, could set off systematically right at first. She saw not the extent of the struggle that she was involved in, neither could she avoid the beginning. She supposed every step that she took, and every resolution which she formed, would bring her enemy to reason, and close the contest. Those failing, she was forced into new measures; and these, like the former, being fitted to her expectations, and failing in their turn, left her continually unprovided and without system. The enemy likewise was induced to prosecute the war, from the temporary expedients we adopted for carrying it on. We were continually expecting to see their credit exhausted, and they were looking to see our currency fail; and thus, between their watching us and we them, the hopes of both have been deceived, and the childishness of the expectation has served to increase the expense.

Yet who, through this wilderness of error, has been to blame? Where is the man who can say, the fault has not in part been his? They were the natural, unavoidable errors of the day. They were the errors of a whole country, which nothing but experience could detect, and time remove. Neither could the circumstances of America admit of system, till either the paper currency was fixed or laid aside. No calculation of a finance could be made on a medium failing without reason, and fluctuating without rule.

But there is one error which might have been prevented, and was not; and as it is not my custom to flatter, but to serve mankind, I will speak it freely. It certainly was the duty of every assembly on the continent to have known, at all times, what was the condition of its treasury, and to have ascertained at every period of depreciation, how much the real worth of the taxes fell short of their nominal value. This knowledge, which might have been easily gained, in the time of it, would have enabled them to have kept their constituents well informed, and this is one of the greatest duties of representation. They ought to have studied and calculated the expenses of the war, the quota of each state, and the consequent proportion that would fall on each man's property for his defence; and this must easily have shown to them, that a tax of an hundred pounds could not be paid by a bushel of apples or an hundred of flour, which was often the case

two or three years ago. But instead of this, which would have been plain and upright dealing, the little line of temporary popularity, the feather of an hour's duration, was too much pursued; and in this involved condition of things, every state, for the want of a little thinking, or a little information, supposed that it supported the whole expenses of the war, when in fact it fell, by the time the tax was levied and collected, above three-fourths short of its own quota.

Impressed with a sense of the danger to which the country was exposed by this lax method of doing business, and the prevailing errors of the day, I published, last October was a twelvemonth, the Crisis No. X. on the revenues of America, and the yearly expense of carrying on the war. My estimation of the latter, together with the civil list of congress, and the civil list of the several states, was two million pounds sterling, which is very nearly nine millions of dollars.

Since that time, congress have gone into a calculation, and have estimated the expenses of the war department and the civil list of congress (exclusive of the civil list of the several governments) at eight millions of dollars; and as the remaining million will be fully sufficient for the civil list of the several states, the two calculations are exceedingly near each other.

The sum of eight millions of dollars they have called upon the states to furnish, and their quotas are as follows, which I shall preface with the resolution itstelf.

"*By the United States in congress assembled.*

October 30, 1781.

"*Resolved*, That the respective states be called upon to furnish the treasury of the United States with their quotas of eight millions of dollars, for the war department and civil list for the ensuing year, to be paid quarterly, in equal proportions, the first payment to be made on the first day of April next.

"*Resolved*, That a committee, consisting of a member from each state, be appointed to apportion to the several states the quota of the above sum.

"November 2d. The committee, appointed to ascertain the proportions of the several states of the monies to be raised for the expenses of the ensuing year, report the following resolutions:

"That the sum of eight millions of dollars, as required to be raised by the resolutions of the 30th of October last, be paid by the states in the following proportion.

New-Hampshire	$ 373,598
Massachusetts	1,307,596
Rhode-Island	216,684
Connecticut	747,196
New-York	373,598
New-Jersey	485,679
Pennsylvania	1,120,794
Delaware	112,085
Maryland	933,996
Virginia	1,307,594
North-Carolina	622,677
South-Carolina	373,598
Georgia	24,905
	$ 8,000,000

"*Resolved*, That it be recommended to the several states, to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use."

On these resolutions I shall offer several remarks.

1st, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country.

2d, On the several quotas, and the nature of a union. And,

3d. On the manner of collection and expenditure.

1st, On the sum itself, and the ability of the country. As I know my own calculation is as low as possible, and as the sum called for by congress, according to their calculation, agrees very nearly therewith, I am sensible it cannot possibly be lower. Neither can it be done for that, unless there is ready money to go to market with; and even in that case, it is only by the utmost management and economy that it can be made to do.

By the accounts which were laid before the British parliament last spring, it appeared that the charge of only subsisting, that is feeding, their army in America, cost annually four million pounds sterling, which is very nearly eighteen millions of dollars. Now if, for eight millions, we can feed, clothe, arm, provide for and pay, an army sufficient for our defence, the very comparison shows that the money must be well laid out.

It may be of some use, either in debate or conversation, to attend to the progress of the expenses of an army,

because it will enable us to see on what part any deficiency will fall.

The first thing is, to feed them and provide for the sick.

Second, to clothe them.

Third, to arm and furnish them.

Fourth, to provide means for removing them from place to place. And,

Fifth, to pay them.

The first and second are absolutely necessary to them as men. The third and fourth are equally as necessary to them as an army. And the fifth is their just due. Now if the sum which shall be raised should fall short, either by the several acts of the states for raising it, or by the manner of collecting it, the deficiency will fall on the fifth head, the soldiers' pay, which would be defrauding them, and eternally disgracing ourselves. It would be a blot on the councils, the country, and the revolution of America, and a man would hereafter be ashamed to own that he had had any hand in it.

But if the deficiency should be still shorter, it would next fall on the fourth head, *the means of removing the army from place to place;* and in this case, the army must either stand still where it can be of no use, or seize on horses, carts, wagons, or any means of transportation which it can lay hold of; and in this instance the country suffers. In short, every attempt to do a thing for less than it can be done for, is sure to become at last both a loss and a dishonor.

But the country cannot bear it, say some. This has been the most expensive doctrine that ever was held out, and cost America millions of money for nothing. Can the country bear to be overrun, ravaged and ruined by an enemy? This will immediately follow where defence is wanting, and defence will ever be wanting where sufficient revenues are not provided. But this is only one part of the folly. The second is, that when the danger comes, invited in part by our not preparing against it, we have been obliged, in a number of instances, to expend double the sums, to do that which at first might have been done for half the money. But this is not all. A third mischief has been, that grain of all sorts, flour, beef, fodder, horses, carts, wagons, or whatever was absolutely or immediately wanted, have been taken without pay. Now, I ask, why was all this done, but from that extremely weak and expensive

doctrine, *that the country could not bear it?* That is, that she could not bear, in the first instance, that which would have saved her twice as much at last; or, in proverbial language, that she could not bear to pay a penny to save a pound; the consequence of which has been, that she has paid a pound for a penny. Why are there so many unpaid certificates in almost every man's hands, but from the parsimony of not providing sufficient revenues? Besides, the doctrine contradicts itself; because, if the whole country cannot bear it, how is it possible that a part should? And yet this has been the case: for those things have been had; and they must be had; but the misfortune is, that they have been obtained in a very unequal manner and upon expensive credit, whereas with ready money they might have been purchased for half the price, and nobody distressed.

But there is another thought which ought to strike us, which is,—how is the army to bear the want of food, clothing and other necessaries? The man who is at home, can turn himself a thousand ways, and find as many means of ease, convenience or relief: but a soldier's life admits of none of those: their wants cannot be supplied from themselves: for an army, though it is the defence of a state, is at the same time the child of a country, and must be provided for in every thing.

And lastly, The doctrine is false. There are not three millions of people, in any part of the universe, who live so well, or have such a fund of ability as in America. The income of a common laborer, who is industrious, is equal to that of the generality of tradesmen in England. In the mercantile line, I have not heard of one who could be said to be a bankrupt since the war began, and in England they have been without number. In America almost every farmer lives on his own lands, and in England not one in a hundred does. In short, it seems as if the poverty of that country had made them furious, and they were determined to risk all to recover all.

Yet, notwithstanding those advantages on the part of America, true it is, that had it not been for the operation of taxes for our necessary defence, we had sunk into a state of sloth and poverty: for there was more wealth lost by neglecting to till the earth in the years 1776, '77, and '78, than the quota of the tax amounts to. That which is lost by neglect of this kind, is lost for ever; whereas that

which is paid, and continues in the country, returns to us again; and at the same time that it provides us with defence, it operates not only as a spur but as a premium to our industry.

I shall now proceed to the second head, *viz. on the several quotas, and the nature of a union.*

There was a time when America had no other bond of union, than that of common interest and affection. The whole country flew to the relief of Boston, and making her cause their own, participated in her cares and administered to her wants. The fate of war, since that day, has carried the calamity in a ten-fold proportion to the southward; but in the mean time the union has been strengthened by a legal compact of the states, jointly and severally ratified, and that which before was choice, or the duty of affection, is now likewise the duty of legal obligation.

The union of America is the foundation stone of her independence; the rock on which it is built; and is something so sacred in her constitution, that we ought to watch every word we speak, and every thought we think, that we injure it not, even by mistake. When a multitude, extended, or rather scattered, over a continent, in the manner we were, mutually agree to form one common centre whereon the whole shall move, to accomplish a particular purpose, all parts must act together and alike, or act not at all, and a stoppage in any one is a stoppage of the whole, at least for a time.

Thus the several states have sent representatives to assemble together in congress, and they have empowered that body, which thus becomes their centre, and are no other than themselves in representation, to conduct and manage the war, while their constituents at home attend to the domestic cares of the country, their internal legislation, their farms, professions or employments: for it is only by reducing complicated things to method and orderly connexion that they can be understood with advantage, or pursued with success. Congress, by virtue of this delegation, estimates the expense, and apportions it out to the several parts of the empire according to their several abilities; and here the debate must end, because each state has already had its voice, and the matter has undergone its whole portion of argument, and can no more be altered by any particular state, than a law of any state, after it has passed, can be altered by any individual. For with

respect to those things which immediately concern the union, and for which the union was purposely established and is intended to secure, each state is to the United States what each individual is to the state he lives in. And it is on this grand point, this movement upon one centre, that our existence as a nation, our happiness as a people, and our safety as individuals, depend.

It may happen that some state or other may be somewhat over or under rated, but this cannot be much. The experience which has been had upon the matter has nearly ascertained their several abilities. But even in this case, it can only admit of an appeal to the United States, but cannot authorise any state to make the alteration itself, any more than our internal government can admit an individual to do so in the case of an act of assembly; for if one state can do it, then may another do the same, and the instant this is done the whole is undone.

Neither is it supposable that any single state can be a judge of all the comparative reasons which may influence the collective body in arranging the quotas of the continent. The circumstances of the several states are frequently varying, occasioned by the accidents of war and commerce, and it will often fall upon some to help others, rather beyond what their exact proportion at another time might be; but even this assistance is as naturally and politically included in the idea of a union, as that of any particular assigned proportion; because we know not whose turn it may be next to want assistance, for which reason that state is the wisest which sets the best example.

Though in matters of bounden duty and reciprocal affection, it is rather a degeneracy from the honesty and ardor of the heart to admit any thing selfish to partake in the government of our conduct, yet in cases where our duty, our affections, and our interest all coincide, it may be of some use to observe their union. The United States will become heir to an extensive quantity of vacant land, and their several titles to shares and quotas thereof will naturally be adjusted according to their relative quotas, during the war, exclusive of that inability which may unfortunately arise to any state by the enemy's holding possession of a part; but as this is a cold matter of interest, I pass it by, and proceed to my third head, *viz.*

On the manner of collection and expenditure.

It hath been our error, as well as our misfortune, to blend the affairs of each state, especially in money matters, with those of the United States; whereas it is to our ease, convenience and interest to keep them separate. The expenses of the United States for carrying on the war, and the expenses of each state for its own domestic government, are distinct things, and to involve them is a source of perplexity and a cloak for fraud. I love method, because I see and am convinced of its beauty and advantage. It is that which makes all business easy and understood, and without which every thing becomes embarrassed and difficult.

There are certain powers which the people of each state have delegated to their legislative and executive bodies, and there are other powers which the people of every state have delegated to congress, among which is that of conducting the war, and, consequently, of managing the expenses attending it; for how else can that be managed, which concerns every state, but by a delegation from each. When a state has furnished its quota, it has an undoubted right to know how it has been applied, and it is as much the duty of congress to inform the state of the one, as it is the duty of the state to provide the other.

In the resolution of congress already recited, it is recommended to the several states *to lay taxes for raising their quotas of money for the United States, separate from those laid for their own particular use.*

This is a most necessary point to be observed, and the distinction should follow all the way through. They should be levied, paid and collected separately, and kept separate in every instance. Neither have the civil officers of any state, or the government of that state, the least right to touch that money which the people pay for the support of their army and the war, any more than congress has to touch that which each state raises for its own use.

This distinction will naturally be followed by another. It will occasion every state to examine nicely into the expenses of its civil list, and to regulate, reduce and bring it into better order than it has hitherto been; because the money for that purpose must be raised apart, and accounted for to the public separately. But while the monies of

both were blended, the necessary nicety was not observed, and the poor soldier, who ought to have been the first, was the last who was thought of.

Another convenience will be, that the people, by paying the taxes separately, will know what they are for; and will likewise know that those which are for the defence of the country will cease with the war, or soon after. For although, as I have before observed, the war is their own, and for the support of their own rights and the protection of their own property, yet they have the same right to know, that they have to pay, and it is the want of not knowing that is often the cause of dissatisfaction.

This regulation of keeping the taxes separate has given rise to a regulation in the office of finance, by which it is directed,

"That the receivers shall, at the end of every month, make out an exact account of the monies received by them respectively, during such month, specifying therein the names of the persons from whom the same shall have been received, the dates and the sums; which account they shall respectively cause to be published in one of the newspapers of the state; to the end that every citizen may know how much of the monies collected from him, in taxes, is transmitted to the treasury of the United States for the support of the war; and also, that it may be known what monies have been at the order of the superintendant of finance. It being proper and necessary, that in a free country the people should be as fully informed of the administration of their affairs as the nature of things will admit."

It is an agreeable thing to see a spirit of order and economy taking place, after such a series of errors and difficulties. A government or an administration, who means and acts honestly, has nothing to fear, and consequently has nothing to conceal; and it would be of use if a monthly or quarterly account was to be published, as well of the expenditures as of the receipts. Eight millions of dollars must be husbanded with an exceeding deal of care to make it do, and therefore, as the management must be reputable, the publication would be serviceable.

I have heard of petitions which have been presented to the assembly of this state (and probably the same may have happened in other states) praying to have the taxes lowered. Now the only way to keep taxes low is, for the United States to have ready money to go to market with;

and though the taxes to be raised for the present year will fall heavy, and there will naturally be some difficulty in paying them, yet the difficulty, in proportion as money spreads about the country, will every day grow less, and in the end we shall save some millions of dollars by it. We see what a bitter, revengeful enemy we have to deal with, and any expense is cheap compared to their merciless paw. We have seen the unfortunate Carolineans hunted like patridges on the mountains, and it is only by providing means for our defence that we shall be kept from the same condition. When we think or talk about taxes, we ought to recollect that we lie down in peace, and sleep in safety; that we can follow our farms or stores, or other occupations, in prosperous tranquillity; and that these inestimable blessings are procured to us by the taxes that we pay. In this view, our taxes are properly our insurance money; they are what we pay to be made safe, and in strict policy are the best money we can lay out.

It was my intention to offer some remarks on the impost law of five per cent. recommended by congress, and to be established as a fund for the payment of the loan-office certificates and other debts of the United States; but I have already extended my piece beyond my intention. And as this fund will make our system of finance complete, and is strictly just, and consequently requires nothing but honesty to do it, there needs but little to be said upon it.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, March 5, 1782.

THE CRISIS.

NO. XII.

—

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF NEWS.

SINCE the arrival of two, if not three packets, in quick succession, at New-York, from England, a variety of unconnected *news* has circulated through the country, and afforded as great a variety of speculation.

That something is the matter in the cabinet and councils of our enemies, on the other side of the water, is certain—that they have run their length of madness, and are under the necessity of changing their measures may easily be seen into; but to what this change of measures may amount, or how far it may correspond with our interest, happiness and duty, is yet uncertain; and from what we have hitherto experienced, we have too much reason to suspect them in every thing.

I do not address this publication so much to the people of America as to the British ministry, whoever they may be, for if it is their intention to promote any kind of negotiation, it is proper they should know beforehand, that the United States have as much honor as bravery; and that they are no more to be seduced from their alliance than their allegiance; that their line of politics is formed, and not dependant, like that of their enemy, on chance and accident.

On our part, in order to know, at any time, what the British government will do, we have only to find out what they ought *not* to do, and this last will be their conduct. Forever changing and forever wrong; too distant from America to improve circumstances, and too unwise to foresee them; scheming without principle, and executing without probability, their whole line of management has hitherto

been blunder and baseness. Every campaign has added to their loss, and every year to their disgrace; till unable to go on, and ashamed to go back, their politics have come to a halt, and all their fine prospects to a halter.

Could our affections forgive, or humanity forget, the wounds of an injured country—we might, under the influence of a momentary oblivion, stand still and laugh. But they are engraven where no amusement can conceal them, and of a kind for which there is no recompence. Can ye restore to us the beloved dead? Can ye say to the grave, give up the murdered? Can ye obliterate from our memories those who are no more? Think not then to tamper with our feelings by insidious contrivance, nor suffocate our humanity by seducing us to dishonor.

In March 1780, I published part of the Crisis, No. VIII. in the newspapers, but did not conclude it in the following papers, and the remainder has lain by me till the present day.

There appeared about that time some disposition in the British cabinet to cease the further prosecution of the war, and as I had formed my opinion, that whenever such a design should take place, it would be accompanied with a dishonorable proposition to America, respecting France, I had suppressed the remainder of that number, not to expose the baseness of any such proposition. But the arrival of the next news from England, declared her determination to go on with the war, and consequently as the political object I had then in view was not become a subject, it was unnecessary in me to bring it forward, which is the reason it was never published.

The matter which I allude to in the unpublished part, I shall now make a quotation of, and apply it as the more enlarged state of things, at this day, shall make convenient or necessary.

It was as follows:

"By the speeches which have appeared from the British parliament, it is easy to perceive to what impolitic and imprudent excesses their passions and prejudices have, in every instance, carried them, during the present war. Provoked at the upright and honorable treaty between America and France, they imagined that nothing more was necessary to be done to prevent its final ratification, than to promise, through the agency of their commissioners (Carlisle, Eden and Johnston) a repeal of their once

offensive acts of parliament. The vanity of the conceit, was as unpardonable as the experiment was impolitic. And so convinced am I of their wrong ideas of America, that I shall not wonder, if in their last stage of political phrenzy, they propose to her to break her alliance with France, and enter into one with them. Such a proposition, should it ever be made, and it has been already more than once hinted at in parliament, would discover such a disposition to perfidiousness, and such disregard of honor and morals, as would add the finishing vice to national corruption.—I do not mention this to put America on the watch, but to put England on her guard, that she do not, in the looseness of her heart, envelop in disgrace every fragment of reputation."—Thus far the quotation.

By the complexion of some part of the news which has transpired through the New-York papers, it seems probable that this insidious era in the British politics is beginning to make its appearance. I wish it may not; for that which is a disgrace to human nature, throws something of a shade over all the human character, and each individual feels his share of the wound that is given to the whole.

The policy of Britain has ever been to divide America in some way or other. In the beginning of the dispute, she practised every art to prevent or destroy the union of the states, well knowing that could she once get them to stand singly, she could conquer them unconditionally. Failing in this project in America, she renewed it in Europe; and after the alliance had taken place, she made secret offers to France to induce her to give up America; and what is still more extraordinary, she at the same time made propositions to Dr. Franklin, then in Paris, the very court to which she was secretly applying, to draw off America from France. But this is not all.

On the 14th of September, 1778, the British court through their secretary, lord Weymouth, made application to the marquis d'Almadovar, the Spanish ambassador at London, to "ask the *mediation*," for these were the words of the court of Spain, for the purpose of negotiating a peace with France, leaving America (as I shall hereafter show) out of the question. Spain readily offered her mediation, and likewise the city of Madrid as the place of conference, but withal, proposed, that the United States of America should be invited to the treaty and considered as independent during the time the business was negotiating. But this

was not the view of England. She wanted to draw France from the war, that she might uninterruptedly pour out all her force and fury upon America; and being disappointed in this plan, as well through the open and generous conduct of Spain, as the determination of France, she refused the mediation which she had solicited.

I shall now give some extracts from the justifying memorial of the Spanish court, in which she has set the conduct and character of Britain, with respect to America, in a clear and striking point of light.

The memorial, speaking of the refusal of the British court to meet in conference, with commissioners from the United States, who were to be considered as independent during the time of the conference, says,

"It is a thing very extraordinary and even ridiculous, that the court of London, who treats the colonies as independent, not only in acting, but of right, during the war, should have a repugnance to treat them as such only in acting during a truce of suspension of hostilities. The convention of Saratoga: the reputing general Burgoyne as a lawful prisoner, in order to suspend his trial; the exchange and liberation of other prisoners made from the colonies; the having named commissioners to go and supplicate the Americans, at their own doors, request peace of them, and treat with them and the congress; and finally, by a thousand other acts of this sort, authorized by the court of London, which have been, and are true signs of the acknowledgment of their independence.

"In aggravation of all the foregoing, at the same time the British cabinet answered the king of Spain in the terms already mentioned, they were insinating themselves at the court of France by means of secret emissaries, and making very great offers to her to abandon the colonies and make peace with England. But there is yet more: for at this same time the English ministry were treating, by means of another certain emissary, with Dr. Franklin, minister plenipotentiary from the colonies, residing at Paris, to whom they made various proposals to disunite them from France, and accommodate matters with England.

"From what has been observed, it evidently follows, that the whole of the British politics was, to disunite the two courts of Paris and Madrid, by means of the suggestions and offers which she separately made to them; and also to separate the colonies from their treaties and engage-

ments entered into with France, and induce them to arm against the house of Bourbon, or *more probably to oppress them when they found from breaking their engagements, that they stood alone and without protection.*

"This therefore, is the net they laid for the American states: that is to say, to tempt them with flattering and very magnificent promises to come to an accommodation with them, exclusive of any intervention of Spain or France, that the British ministry might always remain the arbiters of the fate of the colonies.

"But the Catholic king (the king of Spain) faithful on the one part to the engagements which bind him to the most Christian king (the king of France) his nephew; just and upright on the other, to his own subjects, whom he ought to protect and guard against so many insults; and finally, full of humanity and compassion for the Americans and other individuals who suffer in the present war; he is determined to pursue and prosecute it, and to make all the efforts in his power, until he can obtain a solid and permanent peace, with full and satisfactory securities that it shall be observed."

Thus far the memorial; a translation of which into English, may be seen in full, under the head of State Papers, in the Annual Register, for 1779, p. 367.

The extracts I have here given, serve to show the various endeavors and contrivances of the enemy to draw France from her connexion with America, and to prevail on her to make a separate peace with England, leaving America totally out of the question, and at the mercy of a merciless, unprincipled enemy. The opinion, likewise, which Spain has formed of the British cabinet character, for meanness and perfidiousness, is so exactly the opinion of America, respecting it, that the memorial, in this instance, contains our own sentiments and language; for people, however remote, who think alike, will unavoidably speak alike.

Thus we see the insidious use which Britain endeavored to make of the propositions of peace under the mediation of Spain. I shall now proceed to the second proposition under the mediation of the emperor of Germany and the empress of Russia; the general outline of which was, that a congress of the several powers at war should meet at Vienna, in 1781, to settle preliminaries of peace.

I could wish myself at liberty to make use of all the information which I am possessed of on this subject, but as there is a delicacy in the matter, I do not conceive it prudent, at least at present, to make references and quotations in the same manner as I have done with respect to the mediation of Spain, who published the whole proceedings herself; and therefore, what comes from me, on this part of the business, must rest on my own credit with the public, assuring them, that when the whole proceedings, relative to the proposed congress of Vienna, shall appear, they will find my account not only true but studiously moderate.

We know that at the time this mediation was on the carpet, the expectations of the British king and ministry ran high with respect to the conquest of America. The English packet which was taken with the mail on board, and carried into l'Orient, in France, contained letters from lord G. Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, which expressed in the fullest terms the ministerial idea of a total conquest. Copies of those letters were sent to congress and published in the newspapers of last year. Colonel Laurens brought over the originals, some of which, signed in the hand-writing of the then secretary, Germaine, are now in my possession.

Filled with these high ideas, nothing could be more insolent towards America than the language of the British court on the proposed mediation. A peace with France and Spain she anxiously solicited; but America, as before, was to be left to her mercy, neither would she hear any proposition for admitting an agent from the United States into the congress of Vienna.

On the other hand, France, with an open, noble and manly determination, and the fidelity of a good ally, would hear no proposition for a separate peace, nor even meet in congress at Vienna, without an agent from America: and likewise, that the independent character of the United States, represented by the agent, should be fully and unequivocally defined and settled before any conference should be entered on. The reasoning of the court of France on the several propositions of the two imperial courts, which relate to us, is rather in the style of an American than an ally, and she advocated the cause of America as if she had been America herself.—Thus the second mediation, like the first, proved ineffectual.

But since that time a reverse of fortune has overtaken the British arms, and all their high expectations are dashed to the ground. The noble exertions to the southward under general Greene; the successful operations of the allied arms in the Chesapeake; the loss of most of their islands in the West-Indies, and Minorca in the Mediterranean; the persevering spirit of Spain against Gibraltar; the expected capture of Jamaica; the failure of making a separate peace with Holland, and the expense of an hundred millions sterling, by which all these fine losses were obtained, have read them a loud lesson of disgraceful misfortune, and necessity has called on them to change their ground.

In this situation of confusion and despair their present councils have no fixed character. It is now the hurricane months of British politics. Every day seems to have a storm of its own, and they are scudding under the bare poles of hope. Beaten, but not humble; condemned, but not penitent; they act like men trembling at fate and catching at a straw. From this convulsion, in the entrails of their politics, it is more than probable, that the mountain groaning in labor, will bring forth a mouse as to its size, and a monster in its make. They will try on America the same insidious arts they tried on France and Spain.

We sometimes experience sensations to which language is not equal. The conception is too bulky to be born alive, and in the torture of thinking we stand dumb. Our feelings imprisoned by their magnitude, find no way out—and, in the struggle of expression every finger tries to be a tongue. The machinery of the body seems too little for the mind, and we look about for helps to show our thoughts by. Such must be the sensation of America, whenever Britain, teeming with corruption, shall propose to her to sacrifice her faith.

But, exclusive of the wickedness, there is a personal offence contained in every such attempt. It is calling us villains; for no man asks another to act the villain unless he believes him inclined to be one. No man attempts to seduce a truly honest woman. It is the supposed looseness of her mind that starts the thoughts of seduction, and he who offers it calls her a prostitute. Our pride is always hurt by the same propositions which offend our principles; for when we are shocked at the crime we are wounded by the suspicion of our compliance.

Could I convey a thought that might serve to regulate the public mind, I would not make the interest of the alliance the basis of defending it. All the world are moved by interest, and it affords them nothing to boast of. But I would go a step higher, and defend it on the ground of honor and principle. That our public affairs have flourished under the alliance—that it was wisely made and has been nobly executed—that by its assistance we are enabled to preserve our country from conquest and expel those who sought our destruction—that it is our true interest to maintain it unimpaired, and that while we do so no enemy can conquer us; are matters which experience has taught us, and the common good of ourselves, abstracted from principles of faith and honor, would lead us to maintain the connexion.

But over and above the mere letter of the alliance, we have been nobly and generously treated, and have had the same respect and attention paid to us, as if we had been an old established country. To oblige and be obliged is fair work among mankind, and we want an opportunity of showing to the world that we are a people sensible of kindness and worthy of confidence. Character is to us, in our present circumstances, of more importance than interest. We are a young nation, just stepping upon the stage of public life, and the eye of the world is upon us to see how we act. We have an enemy that is watching to destroy our reputation, and who will go any length to gain some evidence against us, that may serve to render our conduct suspected, and our character odious; because, could she accomplish this, wicked as it is, the world would withdraw from us, as from a people not to be trusted, and our task would then become difficult.

There is nothing which sets the character of a nation in a higher or lower light with others, than the faithfully fulfilling, or perfidiously breaking of treaties. They are things not to be tampered with; and should Britain, which seems very probable, propose to seduce America into such an act of baseness, it would merit from her some mark of unusual detestation. It is one of those extraordinary instances in which we ought not to be contented with the bare negative of congress, because it is an affront on the multitude as well as on the government. It goes on the supposition that the public are not honest men, and that they may be managed by contrivance, though they cannot

be conquered by arms. But, let the world and Britain know, that we are neither to be bought nor sold. That our mind is great and fixed; our prospect clear; and that we will support our character as firmly as our independence.

But I will go still further; general Conway, who made the motion in the British parliament, for discontinuing *offensive* war in America, is a gentleman of an amiable character. We have no personal quarrel with him. But he feels not as we feel; he is not in our situation, and that alone, without any other explanation, is enough.

The British parliament supposes they have many friends in America, and that when all chance of conquest is over, they will be able to draw her from her alliance with France. Now, if I have any conception of the human heart, they will fail in this more than in any thing that they have yet tried.

This part of the business is not a question of policy only but of honor and honesty; and the proposition will have in it something so visibly low and base that their partisans, if they have any, will be ashamed of it. Men are often hurt by a mean action who are not startled at a wicked one, and this will be such a confession of inability, such a declaration of servile thinking, that the scandal of it will ruin all their hopes.

In short, we have nothing to do but to go on with vigor and determination. The enemy is yet in our country. They hold New-York, Charleston and Savannah, and the very being in those places is an offence, and a part of offensive war, and until they can be driven from them or captured in them, it would be folly in us to listen to an idle tale. I take it for granted that the British ministry are sinking under the impossibility of carrying on the war. Let them then come to a fair and open peace with France, Spain, Holland and America in the manner that she ought to do; but until then we can have nothing to say to them.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, May, 22, 1782.

THE CRISIS.

NO. XIII.

—

TO SIR GUY CARLETON.

It is the nature of compassion to associate with misfortune; and I address this to you in behalf even of an enemy, a captain in the British service, now on his way to the headquarters of the American army, and unfortunately doomed to death for a crime not his own. A sentence so extraordinary, an execution so repugnant to every human sensation, ought never to be told without the circumstances which produced it: and as the destined victim is yet in existence, and in your hands rest his life or death, I shall briefly state the case, and the melancholy consequence.

Captain Huddy, of the Jersey militia, was attacked in a small fort on Tom's River, by a party of refugees in the British pay and service, was made prisoner together with his company, carried to New-York and lodged in the provost of that city: about three weeks after which, he was taken out of the provost down to the water-side, put into a boat and brought again upon the Jersey shore, and there, contrary to the practice of all nations but savages, was hung up on a tree, and left hanging till found by our people, who took him down and buried him.

The inhabitants of that part of the country where the murder was committed, sent a deputation to general Washington with a full and certified statement of the fact.—Struck, as every human breast must be, with such brutish outrage, and determined both to punish and prevent it for the future, the general represented the case to general Clinton, who then commanded, and demanded that the refugee officer who ordered and attended the execution, and whose name is Lippincut, should be delivered up as a

murderer; and in case of refusal, that the person of some British officer should suffer in his stead. The demand, though not refused, has not been complied with; and the melancholy lot (not by selection, but by casting lots) has fallen upon captain Asgill, of the guards, who, as I have already mentioned, is on his way from Lancaster to camp, a martyr to the general wickedness of the cause he engaged in, and the ingratitude of those whom he served.

The first reflection which arises on this black business is, what sort of men must Englishmen be, and what sort of order and discipline do they preserve in their army, when in the immediate place of their head-quarters, and under the eye and nose of their commander-in-chief, a prisoner can be taken at pleasure from his confinement, and his death made a matter of sport.

The history of the most savage Indians does not produce instances exactly of this kind. They, at least, have a formality in their punishments. With them it is the horridness of revenge, but with your army it is a still greater crime, the horridness of diversion.

The British generals who have succeeded each other, from the time of general Gage to yourself, have all affected to speak in language that they have no right to. In their proclamations, their addresses, their letters to general Washington, and their supplications to congress (for they deserve no other name) they talk of British honor, British generosity and British clemency, as if those things were matters of fact; whereas, we whose eyes are open, who speak the same language with yourselves, many of whom were born on the same spot with you, and who can no more be mistaken in your words than in your actions, can declare to all the world, that so far as our knowledge goes, there is not a more detestable character, nor a meaner or more barbarous enemy, than the present British one. With us, you have forfeited all pretensions to reputation, and it is only holding you like a wild beast, afraid of your keepers, that you can be made manageable. But to return to the point in question.

Though I can think no man innocent who has lent his hand to destroy the country which he did not plant, and to ruin those that he could not enslave, yet abstracted from all ideas of right and wrong on the original question, captain Asgill, in the present case, is not the guilty man. The villain and the victim are here separated characters. You

hold the one and we the other. You disown, or affect to disown and reprobate the conduct of Lippincut, yet you give him a sanctuary; and by so doing you as effectually become the executioner of Asgill, as if you had put the rope on his neck, and dismissed him from the world. Whatever your feelings on this interesting occasion may be are best known to yourself. Within the grave of our own mind lies buried the fate of Asgill. He becomes the corpse of your will, or the survivor of your justice. Deliver up the one, and you save the other; withhold the one, and the other dies by your choice.

On our part the case is exceeding plain; *an officer has been taken from his confinement and murdered, and the murderer is within your lines.* Your army has been guilty of a thousand instances of equal cruelty, but they have been rendered equivocal, and sheltered from personal detection. Here the crime is fixed; and is one of those extraordinary cases which can neither be denied nor palliated, and to which the custom of war does not apply; for it never could be supposed that such a brutal outrage would ever be committed. It is an original in the history of civilized barbarians, and is truly British.

On your part you are accountable to us for the personal safety of the prisoners within your walls. Here can be no mistake; they can neither be spies nor suspected as such; your security is not endangered, nor your operations subjected to miscarriage, by men immured within a dungeon. They differ in every circumstance from men in the field, and leave no pretence for severity of punishment. But if to the dismal condition of captivity with you, must be added the constant apprehensions of death; if to be imprisoned is so nearly to be entombed; and, if after all, the murderers are to be protected and thereby the crime encouraged, wherein do you differ from Indians, either in conduct or character?

We can have no idea of your honor, or your justice, in any future transaction, of what nature it may be, while you shelter within your lines an outrageous murderer, and sacrifice in his stead an officer of your own. If you have no regard to us, at least spare the blood which it is your duty to save. Whether the punishment will be greater on him, who, in this case, innocently dies, or on him whom sad necessity forces to retaliate, is, in the nicety of sensation, an undecided question? It rests with you to prevent the

sufferings of both. You have nothing to do but to give up the murderer, and the matter ends.

But to protect him, be he who he may, is to patronise his crime, and to trifle it off by frivolous and unmeaning inquiries is to promote it. There is no declaration you can make, nor promise you can give that will obtain credit. It is the man and not the apology that is demanded.

You see yourself pressed on all sides to spare the life of your own officer, for die he will if you withhold justice. The murder of captain Huddy is an offence not to be borne with, and there is no security which we can have that such actions or similar ones shall not be repeated, but by making the punishment fall upon yourselves. To destroy the last security of captivity, and to take the unarmed, the unresisting prisoner to private and sportive execution, is carrying barbarity too high for silence. The evil *must* be put an end to; and the choice of persons rests with you. But if your attachment to the guilty is stronger than to the innocent, you invent a crime that must destroy your character, and if the cause of your king needs to be so supported, forever cease, sir, to torture our remembrance with the wretched phrases of British honor, British generosity, and British clemency.

From this melancholy circumstance, learn, sir, a lesson of morality. The refugees are men whom your predecessors have instructed in wickedness, the better to fit them to their master's purpose. To make them useful, they have made them vile, and the consequence of their tutored villainy is now descending on the heads of their encouragers. They have been trained like hounds to the scent of blood, and cherished in every species of dissolute barbarity. Their ideas of right and wrong are worn away in the constant habitude of repeated infamy, till like men practised in execution they feel not the value of another's life.

The task before you though painful is not difficult; give up the murderer, and save your officer, as the first outset of a necessary reformation.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, May 31, 1782.

THE CRISIS.

NO. XIV.

—

TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

My lord,—A speech, which has been printed in several of the British and New-York newspapers, as coming from your lordship, in answer to one from the duke of Richmond, of the 10th of July last, contains expressions and opinions so new and singular, and so enveloped in mysterious reasoning, that I address this publication to you, for the purpose of giving them a free and candid examination. The speech that I allude to is in these words:

"His lordship said, it had been mentioned in another place, that he had been guilty of inconsistency. To clear himself of this, he asserted that he still held the same principles in respect to American independence which he at first imbibed. He had been, and yet was of opinion, whenever the parliament of Great Britain acknowledges that point, the sun of England's glory is set forever. Such were the sentiments he possessed on a former day, and such the sentiments he continued to hold at this hour. It was the opinion of lord Chatham, as well as many other able statesmen. Other noble lords, however, think differently; and as the majority of the cabinet support them, he acquiesced in the measure, dissenting from the idea; and the point is settled for bringing the matter into the full discussion of parliament, where it will be candidly, fairly, and impartially debated. The independence of America would end in the ruin of England; and that a peace patched up with France, would give that proud enemy the means of yet trampling on this country. The sun of England's glory he wished not to see set forever; he looked for a spark at

least to be left, which might in time light us up to a new day. But if independence was to be granted, if parliament deemed that measure prudent, he foresaw, in his own mind, that England was undone. He wished to God that he had been deputed to congress, that he might plead the cause of that country as well as of this, and that he might exercise whatever powers he possessed as an orator, to save both from ruin, in a conviction to congress, that, if their independence was signed, their liberties were gone forever.

"Peace, his lordship added, was a desirable object, but it must be an honorable peace, and not an humiliating one, dictated by France, or insisted on by America. It was very true, that this kingdom was not in a flourishing state, it was impoverished by war. But if we were not rich, it was evident that France was poor. If we were straitened in our finances, the enemy were exhausted in their resources. This was a great empire; it abounded with brave men, who were able and willing to fight in a common cause; the language of humiliation should not, therefore, be the language of Great Britain. His lordship said, that he was not afraid nor ashamed of those expressions going to America. There were numbers, great numbers there, who were of the same way of thinking, in respect to that country being dependant on this, and who, with his lordship, perceived ruin and independence linked together."

Thus far the speech; on which I remark—That his lordship is a total stranger to the mind and sentiments of America; that he has wrapped himself up in fond delusion, that something less than independence may, under his administration, be accepted; and he wishes himself sent to congress, to prove the most extraordinary of all doctrines, which is, that *independence*, the sublimest of all human conditions, is loss of liberty.

In answer to which we may say, that in order to know what the contrary word *dependance* means, we have only to look back to those years of severe humiliation, when the mildest of all petitions could obtain no other notice than the haughtiest of all insults; and when the base terms of unconditional submission were demanded, or undistinguishable destruction threatened. It is nothing to us that the ministry have been changed, for they may be changed again. The guilt of a government is the crime of a whole country; and the nation that can, though but for a moment, think and act as England has done, can never

afterwards be believed or trusted. There are cases in which it is as impossible to restore character to life, as it is to recover the dead. It is a phenix that can expire but once, and from whose ashes there is no resurrection. Some offences are of such a slight composition, that they reach no further than the temper, and are created or cured by a thought. But the sin of England has struck the heart of America, and nature has not left it in our power to say we can forgive.

Your lordship wishes for an opportunity to plead before congress *the cause of England and America, and to save*, as you say, *both from ruin.*

That the country, which, for more than seven years has sought our destruction, should now cringe to solicit our protection, is adding the wretchedness of disgrace to the misery of disappointment; and if England has the least spark of supposed honor left, that spark must be darkened by asking, and extinguished by receiving, the smallest favor from America; for the criminal who owes his life to the grace and mercy of the injured, is more executed by living, than he who dies.

But a thousand pleadings, even from your lordship, can have no effect. Honor, interest, and every sensation of the heart, would plead against you. We are a people who think not as you think; and what is equally true, you cannot feel as we feel. The situations of the two countries are exceedingly different. Ours has been the seat of war; yours has seen nothing of it. The most wanton destruction has been committed in our sight; the most insolent barbarity has been acted on our feelings. We can look round and see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, once the fair fruit of hard industry, and now the striking monuments of British brutality. We walk over the dead whom we loved, in every part of America, and remember by whom they fell. There is scarcely a village but brings to life some melancholy thought and reminds us of what we have suffered, and of those we have lost by the inhumanity of Britain. A thousand images arise to us, which, from situation, you cannot see, and are accompanied by as many ideas which you cannot know; and therefore your supposed system of reasoning would apply to nothing, and all your expectations die of themselves.

The question, whether England shall accede to the independence of America, and which your lordship says is

to undergo a parliamentary discussion, is so very simple, and composed of so few cases, that it scarcely needs a debate.

It is the only way out of an expensive and ruinous war, which has no object, and without which acknowledgment there can be no peace.

But your lordship says, *the sun of Great Britain will set whenever she acknowledges the independence of America.*—Whereas the metaphor would have been strictly just, to have left the sun wholly out of the figure, and have ascribed her not acknowledging it to the influence of the moon.

But the expression, if true, is the greatest confession of disgrace that could be made, and furnishes America with the highest notions of sovereign independent importance. Mr. Wedderburne, about the year 1776, made use of an idea of much the same kind,—*Relinquish America!* says he—*What is it but to desire a giant to shrink spontaneously into a dwarf.*

Alas! are those people who call themselves Englishmen, of so little internal consequence, that when America is gone, or shuts her eyes upon them, their sun is set, they can shine no more, but grope about in obscurity, and contract into insignificant animals? Was America, then, the giant of the empire, and England only her dwarf in waiting? Is the case so strangely altered, that those who once thought we could not live without them, are now brought to declare that they cannot exist without us? Will they tell to the world, and that from their first minister of state, that America is their all in all; that it is by her importance only that they can live, and breathe, and have a being? Will they, who long since threatened to bring us to their feet, bow themselves at ours, and own that without us they are not a nation? Are they become so unqualified to debate on independence, that they have lost all idea of it in themselves, and are calling to the rocks and mountains of America to cover their insignificance? Or, if America is lost, is it manly to sob over it like a child for its rattle, and invite the laughter of the world by declarations of disgrace? Surely, a more consistent line of conduct would be, to bear it without complaint; and to show that England, without America, can preserve her independence, and a suitable rank with other European

powers. You were not contented while you had her, and to weep for her now is childish.

But lord Shelburne thinks something may yet be done. What that something is, or how it is to be accomplished, is a matter in obscurity. By arms there is no hope. The experience of nearly eight years, with the expense of an hundred million pounds sterling, and the loss of two armies, must positively decide that point. Besides, the British have lost their interest in America with the disaffected. Every part of it has been tried. There is no new scene left for delusion: and the thousands who have been ruined by adhering to them, and have now to quit the settlements which they had acquired, and be conveyed like transports to cultivate the deserts of Augustine and Nova-Scotia, has put an end to all further expectations of aid.

If you cast your eyes on the people of England, what have they to console themselves with for the millions expended? Or, what encouragement is there left to continue throwing good money after bad? America can carry on the war for ten years longer, and all the charges of government included, for less than you can defray the charges of war and government for one year. And I, who know both countries, know well, that the people of America can afford to pay their share of the expense much better than the people of England can. Besides, it is their own estates and property, their own rights, liberties and government, that they are defending; and were they not to do it, they would deserve to lose all, and none would pity them. The fault would be their own, and their punishment just.

The British army in America care not how long the war lasts. They enjoy an easy and indolent life. They fatten on the folly of one country and the spoils of another; and, between their plunder and their pay, may go home rich. But the case is very different with the laboring farmer, the working tradesman, and the necessitous poor in England, the sweat of whose brow goes day after day to feed, in prodigality and sloth, the army that is robbing both them and us. Removed from the eye of that country that supports them, and distant from the government that employs them, they cut and carve for themselves, and there is none to call them to account.

But England will be ruined, says lord Shelburne, if America is independent.

Then, I say, is England already ruined, for America is already independent: and if lord Shelburne will not allow this, he immediately denies the fact which he infers. Besides, to make England the mere creature of America, is paying too great a compliment to us, and too little to himself.

But the declaration is a rhapsody of inconsistency. For to say, as lord Shelburne has numberless times said, that the war against America is ruinous, and yet to continue the prosecution of that ruinous war for the purpose of avoiding ruin, is a language which cannot be understood. Neither is it possible to see how the independence of America is to accomplish the ruin of England after the war is over, and yet not affect it before. America cannot be more independent of her, nor a greater enemy to her, hereafter than she now is; nor can England derive less advantages from her than at present; why then is ruin to follow in the best state of the case, and not in the worst? And if not in the worst, why is it to follow at all?

That a nation is to be ruined by peace and commerce, and fourteen or fifteen millions a-year less expenses than before, is a new doctrine in politics. We have heard much clamor of national savings and economy; but surely the true economy would be, to save the whole charge of a silly, foolish, and headstrong war; because, compared with this, all other retrenchments are baubles and trifles.

But is it possible that lord Shelburne can be serious in supposing that the least advantage can be obtained by arms, or that any advantage can be equal to the expense or the danger of attempting it? Will not the capture of one army after another satisfy him, must all become prisoners? Must England ever be the sport of hope and the victim of delusion? Sometimes our currency was to fail; another time our army was to disband: then whole provinces were to revolt. Such a general said this and that; another wrote so and so; lord Chatham was of this opinion; and lord somebody else of another. To-day 20,000 Russians and 20 Russian ships of the line were to come; to-morrow the empress was abused without mercy or decency. Then the emperor of Germany was to be bribed with a million of money, and the king of Prussia was to do wonderful things. At one time it was, Lo here! and then it was Lo there! Sometimes this power, and sometimes that power, was to engage in the war, just as if the whole

world was as mad and foolish as Britain. And thus, from year to year, has every straw been catched at, and every Will-with-a-wisp led them a new dance.

This year a still newer folly is to take place. Lord Shelburne wishes to be sent to congress, and he thinks that something may be done.

Are not the repeated declarations of congress, and which all America supports, that they will not even hear any proposals whatever, until the unconditional and unequivocal independence of America is recognised; are not, I say, these declarations answer enough?

But for England to receive any thing from America now, after so many insults, injuries and outrages, acted towards us, would show such a spirit of meanness in her, that we could not but despise her for accepting it. And so far from lord Shelburne's coming here to solicit it, it would be the greatest disgrace we could do them to offer it. England would appear a wretch indeed, at this time of day, to ask or owe any thing to the bounty of America. Has not the name of Englishman blots enough upon it, without inventing more? Even lucifer would scorn to reign in heaven by permission, and yet an Englishman can creep for only an entrance into America. Or, has a land of liberty so many charms, that to be a door-keeper in it is better than to be an English minister of state?

But what can this expected something be? Or, if obtained, what can it amount to, but new disgraces, contentions and quarrels? The people of America have for years accustomed themselves to think and speak so freely and contemptuously of English authority, and the inveteracy is so deeply rooted, that a person invested with any authority from that country, and attempting to exercise it here, would have the life of a toad under a harrow. They would look on him as an interloper, to whom their compassion permitted a residence. He would be no more than the Mungo of a farce; and if he disliked that, he must set off. It would be a station of degradation, debased by our pity, and despised by our pride, and would place England in a more contemptible situation than any she has yet been in during the war. We have too high an opinion of ourselves, ever to think of yielding again the least obedience to outlandish authority; and for a thousand reasons, England would be the last country in the world to yield it to.

She has been treacherous, and we know it. Her character is gone, and we have seen the funeral.

Surely she loves to fish in troubled waters, and drink the cup of contention, or she would not now think of mingling her affairs with those of America. It would be like a foolish dotard taking to his arms the bride that despises him, or who has placed on his head the ensigns of her disgust. It is kissing the hand that boxes his ears, and proposing to renew the exchange. The thought is as servile as the war was wicked, and shows the last scene of the drama to be as inconsistent as the first.

As America is gone, the only act of manhood is to *let her go*. Your lordship had no hand in the separation, and you will gain no honor by temporising politics. Besides, there is something so exceedingly whimsical, unsteady, and even insincere in the present conduct of England, that she exhibits herself in the most dishonorable colors.

On the second of August last, general Carleton and admiral Digby wrote to general Washington in these words:

"The resolution of the house of commons, of the 27th of February last, has been placed in your excellency's hands, and intimations given at the same time that further pacific measures were likely to follow. Since which, until the present time, we have had no direct communications with England; but a mail is now arrived, which brings us very important information. We are acquainted, sir, *by authority*, that negotiations for a general peace have already commenced at Paris, and that Mr. Grenville is invested with full powers to treat with all the parties at war, and is now at Paris in the execution of his commission. And we are further, sir, made acquainted, *that his majesty, in order to remove any obstacles to that peace which he so ardently wishes to restore, has commanded his ministers to direct Mr. Grenville, that the independence of the Thirteen United Provinces, should be proposed by him in the first instance, instead of making it a condition of a general treaty.*"

Now, taking your present measures into view, and comparing them with the declaration in this letter, pray what is the word of your king, or his ministers, or the parliament, good for? Must we not look upon you as a confederated body of faithless, treacherous men, whose assurances are fraud, and their language deceit? What opinion can we

possibly form of you, but that you are a lost, abandoned, profligate nation, who sport even with your own character, and are to be held by nothing but the bayonet or the halter?

To say, after this, *that the sun of Great Britain will be set, whenever she acknowledges the independence of America*, when the not doing it is the unqualified lie of government, can be no other than the language of ridicule, the jargon of inconsistency. There were thousands in America who predicted the delusion, and looked upon it as a trick of treachery, to take us from our guard, and draw off our attention from the only system of finance, by which we can be called, or deserve to be called, a sovereign, independent people. The fraud, on your part, might be worth attempting, but the sacrifice to obtain it is too high.

There are others who credited the assurance, because they thought it impossible that men who had their characters to establish, would begin it with a lie. The prosecution of the war by the former ministry was savage and horrid; since which it has been mean, trickish, and delusive. The one went greedily into the passion of revenge, the other into the subtleties of low contrivance; till, between the crimes of both, there is scarcely left a man in America, be he whig or tory, who does not despise or detest the conduct of Britain.

The management of lord Shelburne, whatever may be his views, is a caution to us, and must be to the world, never to regard British assurances. A perfidy so notorious cannot be hid. It stands even in the public papers of New-York, with the names of Carleton and Digby affixed to it. It is a proclamation that the king of England is not to be believed; that the spirit of lying is the governing principle of the ministry. It is holding up the character of the house of commons to public infamy, and warning all men not to credit them. Such are the consequences which lord Shelburne's management has brought upon his country.

After the authorized declarations contained in Carleton and Digby's letter, you ought, from every motive of honor, policy and prudence, to have fulfilled them, whatever might have been the event. It was the least atonement that you could possibly make to America, and the greatest kindness you could do to yourselves; for you will save

millions by a general peace, and you will lose as many by continuing the war.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, Oct. 29, 1782.

P. S. The manuscript copy of this letter is sent your lordship, by the way of our head-quarters, to New-York, inclosing a late pamphlet of mine, addressed to the abbe Raynal, which will serve to give your lordship some idea of the principles and sentiments of America.

C. S.

THE CRISIS.

NO. XV.

"THE times that tried men's souls,"* are over—and the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew, gloriously and happily accomplished.

But to pass from the extremes of danger to safety—from the tumult of war, to the tranquillity of peace, though sweet in contemplation, requires a gradual composure of the senses to receive it. Even calmness has the power of stunning, when it opens too instantly upon us. The long and raging hurricane that should cease in a moment, would leave us in a state rather of wonder than enjoyment; and some moments of recollection must pass, before we could be capable of tasting the felicity of repose. There are but few instances, in which the mind is fitted for sudden transitions: it takes in its pleasures by reflection and comparison, and those must have time to act, before the relish for new scenes is complete.

In the present case—the mighty magnitude of the object—the various uncertainties of fate it has undergone—the numerous and complicated dangers we have suffered or escaped—the eminence we now stand on, and the vast prospect before us, must all conspire to impress us with contemplation.

To see it in our power to make a world happy—to teach mankind the art of being so—to exhibit on the theatre of the universe, a character hitherto unknown—and to have, as it were, a new creation entrusted to our hands, are honors that command reflection, and can neither be too highly estimated, nor too gratefully received.

* "These are the times that try men's souls." The Crisis, No. I. published December, 1776.

In this pause then of recollection—while the storm is ceasing, and the long agitated mind vibrating to a rest, let us look back on the scenes we have passed, and learn from experience what is yet to be done.

Never, I say, had a country so many openings to happiness as this. Her setting out in life, like the rising of a fair morning, was unclouded and promising. Her cause was good. Her principles just and liberal. Her temper serene and firm. Her conduct regulated by the nicest steps, and every thing about her wore the mark of honor. It is not every country (perhaps there is not another in the world) that can boast so fair an origin. Even the first settlement of America corresponds with the character of the revolution. Rome, once the proud mistress of the universe, was originally a band of ruffians. Plunder and rapine made her rich, and her oppression of millions made her great. But America need never be ashamed to tell her birth, nor relate the stages by which she rose to empire.

The remembrance then, of what is past, if it operates rightly, must inspire her with the most laudable of all ambition, that of adding to the fair fame she began with. The world has seen her great in adversity. Struggling, without a thought of yielding, beneath accumulated difficulties. Bravely, nay proudly, encountering distress, and rising in resolution as the storm increased. All this is justly due to her, for her fortitude has merited the character. Let then the world see that she can bear prosperity: and that her honest virtue in time of peace, is equal to the bravest virtue in time of war.

She is now descending to the scenes of quiet and domestic life. Not beneath the cypress shade of disappointment but to enjoy, in her own land, and under her own vine, the sweet of her labors, and the reward of her toil.—In this situation, may she never forget that a fair national reputation, is of as much importance as independence. That it possesses a charm that wins upon the world, and makes even enemies civil.—That it gives a dignity which is often superior to power, and commands reverence where pomp and splendor fail.

It would be a circumstance ever to be lamented and never to be forgotten, were a single blot, from any cause whatever, suffered to fall on a revolution, which to the end of time must be an honor to the age that accomplished it:

and which has contributed more to enlighten the world, and diffuse a spirit of freedom and liberality among mankind, than any human event (if this may be called one) that ever preceded it.

It is not among the least of the calamities of a long continued war, that it unhinges the mind from those nice sensations which at other times appear so amiable. The continual spectacle of wo, blunts the finer feelings, and the necessity of bearing with the sight, renders it familiar. In like manner, are many of the moral obligations of society weakened, till the custom of acting by necessity becomes an apology, where it is truly a crime. Yet let but a nation conceive rightly of its character, and it will be chastely just in protecting it. None ever began with a fairer than America, and none can be under a greater obligation to preserve it.

The debt which America has contracted, compared with the cause she has gained, and the advantages to flow from it, ought scarcely to be mentioned. She has it in her choice to do, and to live, as happily as she pleases. The world is in her hands. She has no foreign power to monopolize her commerce, perplex her legislation, or control her prosperity. The struggle is over, which must one day have happened, and, perhaps, never could have happened at a better time.* And instead of a domineering master, she

* That the revolution began at the exact period of time best fitted to the purpose, is sufficiently proved by the event—But the great hinge on which the whole machine turned is the *Union of the States*: and this union was naturally produced by the inability of any one state to support itself against any foreign enemy without the assistance of the rest.

Had the states severally been less able than they were when the war began, their united strength would not have been equal to the undertaking, and they must in all human probability have failed—And on the other hand, had they severally been more able, they might not have seen, or, what is more, might not have felt, the necessity of uniting; and either by attempting to stand alone or in small confederacies, would have been separately conquered.

Now, as we cannot see a time (and many years must pass away before it can arrive) when the strength of any one state, or several united, can be equal to the whole of the present United States, and as we have seen the extreme difficulty of collectively prosecuting the war to a successful issue, and preserving our national importance in the world, therefore, from the experience we have had, and the knowledge we have gained, we must, unless we make a waste of wisdom, be strongly impressed with the advantage, as well as the necessity of strengthening that happy union which has been our salvation and without which we should have been a ruined people.

While I was writing this note, I cast my eye on the pamphlet Common Sense, from which I shall make an extract, as it exactly applies to the case. It is as follows:

"I have never met with a man, either in England or America, who hath not confessed it as his opinion that a separation between the countries would take place one time or other; and there is no instance in which we have

has gained an *ally*, whose exemplary greatness, and universal liberality, have extorted a confession even from her enemies.

With the blessings of peace, independence, and an universal commerce, the states individually and collectively, will have leisure and opportunity to regulate and establish their domestic concerns, and to put it beyond the power of calumny to throw the least reflection on their honor. Character is much easier kept than recovered, and that man, if any such there be, who, from sinister views, or littleness of soul, lends unseen, his hand to injure it, contrives a wound it will never be in his power to heal.

As we have established an inheritance for posterity, let that inheritance descend, with every mark of an honorable conveyance. The little it will cost, compared with the worth of the states, the greatness of the object, and the value of national character, will be a profitable exchange.

But that which must more forcibly strike a thoughtful, penetrating mind, and which includes and renders easy all inferior concerns, is the *Union of the States*. On this, our great national character depends. It is this which must give us importance abroad and security at home. It is through this only, that we are, or can be nationally known in the world, it is the flag of the United States which renders our ships and commerce safe on the seas, or in a foreign port. Our Mediterranean passes must be obtained under the same style. All our treaties whether of alliance, peace or commerce, are formed under the sovereignty of the United States, and Europe knows us by no other name or title.

The division of the empire into states is for our own convenience, but abroad this distinction ceases. The affairs of each state are local. They can go no further than to itself. And were the whole worth of even the richest of them expended in revenue, it would not be sufficient to support sovereignty against a foreign attack. In short, we have

shown less judgment, than in endeavoring to describe, what we call, the ripeness or fitness of the continent for independence.

"As all men allow the measure, and differ only in their opinion of the time, let us, in order to remove mistakes, take a general survey of things, and endeavor, if possible, to find out the *very time*. But we need not to go far, the inquiry ceases at once, for, *the time has found us*. The general concurrence the glorious union of all things prove the fact.

"It is not in numbers, but in a union, that our great strength lies. The continent is just arrived at that pitch of strength, in which no single colony is able to support itself, and the whole, when united, can accomplish the matter; and either more or less than this, might be fatal in its effects."

no other national sovereignty than as United States. It would even be fatal for us if we had—too expensive to be maintained, and impossible to be supported. Individuals or individual states may call themselves what they please; but the world, and especially the world of enemies, is not to be held in awe by the whistling of a name. Sovereignty must have power to protect all the parts that compose and constitute it: and as UNITED STATES we are equal to the importance of the title, but otherwise we are not. Our union, well and wisely regulated and cemented, is the cheapest way of being great—The easiest way of being powerful, and the happiest invention in government which the circumstances of America can admit of—Because it collects from each state, that which, by being inadequate, can be of no use to it, and forms an aggregate that serves for all.

The states of Holland are an unfortunate instance of the effects of individual sovereignty. Their disjointed condition exposes them to numerous intrigues, losses, calamities and enemies; and the almost impossibility of bringing their measures to a decision, and that decision into execution, is to them, and would be to us, a source of endless misfortune.

It is with confederated states as with individuals in society; something must be yielded up to make the whole secure. In this view of things we gain by what we give, and draw an annual interest greater than the capital.—I ever feel myself hurt when I hear the union, that great palladium of our liberty and safety, the least irreverently spoken of. It is the most sacred thing in the constitution of America, and that which every man should be most proud and tender of. Our citizenship in the United States is our national character. Our citizenship in any particular state is only our local distinction. By the latter we are known at home, by the former to the world. Our great title is AMERICANS—our inferior one varies with the place.

So far as my endeavors could go, they have all been directed to conciliate the affections, unite the interests and draw and keep the mind of the country together; and the better to assist in this foundation work of the revolution, I have avoided all places of profit or office, either in the state I live in, or in the United States; kept myself at a distance from all parties and party connexions, and even disregarded all private and inferior concerns: and when we take

into view the great work which we have gone through, and feel, as we ought to feel, the just importance of it, we shall then see, that the little wranglings and indecent contentions of personal parley, are as dishonorable to our characters, as they are injurious to our repose.

It was the cause of America that made me an author. The force with which it struck my mind, and the dangerous condition the country appeared to me in, by courting an impossible and an unnatural reconciliation with those who were determined to reduce her, instead of striking out into the only line that could cement and save her, A DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, made it impossible for me, feeling as I did, to be silent: and if in the course of more than seven years, I have rendered her any service, I have likewise added something to the reputation of literature, by freely and disinterestedly employing it in the great cause of mankind and showing that there may be genius without prostitution.

Independence always appeared to me practicable and probable; provided the sentiment of the country could be formed and held to the object: and there is no instance in the world, where a people so extended, and wedded to former habits of thinking, and under such a variety of circumstances, were so instantly and effectually pervaded, by a turn in politics, as in the case of independence, and who supported their opinion, undiminished, through such a succession of good and ill fortune, till they crowned it with success.

But as the scenes of war are closed, and every man preparing for home and happier times, I therefore take my leave of the subject. I have most sincerely followed it from beginning to end, and through all its turns and windings: and whatever country I may hereafter be in, I shall always feel an honest pride at the part I have taken and acted, and a gratitude to nature and providence for putting it in my power to be of some use to mankind.

COMMON SENSE.

Philadelphia, April 19, 1783.

THE CRISIS.

NO. XVI.

—

TO THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA.

In "Rivington's New-York Gazette," of December 6th, is a publication, under the appearance of a letter from London, dated September 30th; and is on a subject which demands the attention of the United States.

The public will remember that a treaty of commerce between the United States and England was set on foot last spring, and that until the said treaty could be completed, a bill was brought into the British parliament, by the then chancellor of the exchequer, Mr. Pitt, to admit and legalize (as the case then required) the commerce of the United States into the British ports and dominions. But neither the one nor the other has been completed. The commercial treaty is either broken off, or remains as it began; and the bill in parliament has been thrown aside. And in lieu thereof, a selfish system of English politics has started up, calculated to fetter the commerce of America, by engrossing to England the carrying trade of the American produce to the West-India islands.

Among the advocates for this last measure is lord Sheffield, a member of the British parliament, who has published a pamphlet entitled "Observations on the Commerce of the American States." The pamphlet has two objects; the one is to allure the Americans to purchase British manufactures; and the other to spirit up the British parliament to prohibit the citizens of the United States from trading to the West-India islands.

Viewed in this light, the pamphlet, though in some parts dexterously written, is an absurdity. It offends, in the very act of endeavoring to ingratiate; and his lordship, as

a politician, ought not to have suffered the two objects to have appeared together. The letter alluded to, contains extracts from the pamphlet, with high encomiums on Lord Sheffield, for laboriously endeavoring (as the letter styles it) "to show the mighty advantages of retaining the carrying trade."

Since the publication of this pamphlet in England, the commerce of the United States to the West-Indies, in American vessels, has been prohibited; and all intercourse, except in British bottoms, the property of, and navigated by British subjects, cut off.

That a country has a right to be as foolish as it pleases, has been proved by the practice of England for many years past: in her island situation, sequestered from the world, she forgets that her whispers are heard by other nations; and in her plans of politics and commerce, she seems not to know, that other votes are necessary besides her own. America would be equally as foolish as Britain, were she to suffer so great a degradation on her flag, and such a stroke on the freedom of her commerce, to pass without a balance.

We admit the right of any nation to prohibit the commerce of another into its own dominions, where there are no treaties to the contrary; but as this right belongs to one side as well as the other, there is always a way left to bring avarice and insolence to reason.

But the ground of security which lord Sheffield has chosen to erect his policy upon, is of a nature which ought and I think must awaken, in every American, a just and strong sense of national dignity. Lord Sheffield appears to be sensible, that in advising the British nation and parliament to engross to themselves so great a part of the carrying trade of America, he is attempting a measure which cannot succeed, if the politics of the United State be properly directed to counteract the assumption.

But, says he, in his pamphlet, "It will be a long time before the American states can be brought to act as a nation, neither are they to be feared as such by us."

What is this more or less than to tell us, that while we have no national system of commerce, the British will govern our trade by their own laws and proclamations as they please. The quotation discloses a truth too serious to be overlooked, and too michievous not to be remedied.

Among other circumstances which led them to this discovery, none could operate so effectually, as the injudicious, uncandid and indecent opposition made by sundry persons in a certain state, to the recommendations of congress last winter, for an import duty of five per cent. It could not but explain to the British a weakness in the national power of America, and encourage them to attempt restrictions on her trade, which otherwise they would not have dared to hazard. Neither is there any state in the union, whose policy was more misdirected to its interest than the state I allude to, because her principal support is the carrying trade, which Britain, induced by the want of a well-centred power in the United States to protect and secure, is now attempting to take away. It fortunately happened (and to no state in the union more than the state in question) that the terms of peace were agreed on before the opposition appeared, otherwise, there cannot be a doubt, that if the same idea of the diminished authority of America had occurred to them at that time as has occurred to them since, but they would have made the same grasp at the fisheries, as they have done at the carrying trade.

It is surprising that an authority which can be supported with so much ease, and so little expense, and capable of such extensive advantages to the country, should be cavilled at by those whose duty it is to watch over it, and whose existence as a people depends upon it. But this, perhaps, will ever be the case, till some misfortune awakens us into reason, and the instance now before us is but a gentle beginning of what America must expect, unless she guards her union with nicer care and stricter honor. United, she is formidable, and that with the least possible charge a nation can be so: separated, she is a medley of individual nothings, subject to the sport of foreign nations.

It is very probable that the ingenuity of commerce may have found out a method to evade and supersede the intentions of the British, in interdicting the trade with the West-India islands. The language of both being the same, and their customs well understood, the vessels of one country may, by deception, pass for those of another. But this would be a practice too debasing for a sovereign people to stoop to, and too profligate not to be discountenanced. An illicit trade, under any shape it can be placed, cannot be carried on without a violation of truth.

America is now sovereign and independent, and ought to conduct her affairs in a regular style of character. She has the same right to say that no British vessel shall enter her ports, or that no British manufactures shall be imported, but in American bottoms, the property of, and navigated by American subjects, as Britain has to say the same thing respecting the West-Indies. Or she may lay a duty of ten, fifteen or twenty shillings per ton (exclusive of other duties) on every British vessel coming from any port of the West-Indies, where she is not admitted to trade, the said tonnage to continue as long on her side as the prohibition continues on the other.

But it is only by acting in union, that the usurpations of foreign nations on the freedom of trade can be counteracted, and security extended to the commerce of America. And when we view a flag, which to the eye is beautiful, and to contemplate its rise and origin inspires a sensation of sublime delight, our national honor must unite with our interest to prevent injury to the one, or insult to the other.

COMMON SENSE.

New-York, December 9, 1783.

END OF THE CRISIS.

PUBLIC GOOD:

BEING AN EXAMINATION INTO THE CLAIM OF VIRGINIA TO THE

VACANT WESTERN TERRITORY,

AND OF THE RIGHT OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE SAME: TO WHICH IS ADDED PROPOSALS FOR

LAYING OFF A NEW STATE,

TO BE APPLIED AS A FUND FOR CARRYING ON THE WAR, OR REDEEMING THE NATIONAL DEBT.

—

Written in 1780.

PREFACE.

THE following pages are on a subject hitherto little understood but highly interesting to the United States.

They contain an investigation of the claims of Virginia to the vacant Western territory, and of the right of the United States to the same; with some outlines of a plan for laying out a new state, to be applied as a fund, for carrying on the war, or redeeming the national debt.

The reader, in the course of this publication, will find it studiously plain, and, as far as I can judge, perfectly candid. What materials I could get at I have endeavored to place in a clear line, and deduce such arguments therefrom as the subject required. In the prosecution of it, I have considered myself as an advocate for the right of the states, and taken no other liberty with the subject than what a counsel would, and ought to do, in behalf of a client.

I freely confess that the respect I had conceived, and still preserve, for the character of Virginia, was a constant check upon those sallies of imagination, which are fairly and advantageously indulged against an enemy, but ungenerous when against a friend.

If there is any thing I have omitted or mistaken, to the injury of the intentions of Virginia or her claims, I shall gladly rectify it, or if there is any thing yet to add, should the subject require it, I shall as cheerfully undertake it; being fully convinced, that to have matters fairly discussed, and properly understood, is a principal means of preserving harmony and perpetuating friendship.

THE AUTHOR.

PUBLIC GOOD.

When we take into view the mutual happiness and united interests of the states of America, and consider the vast consequences to arise from a strict attention of each, and of all, to every thing which is just, reasonable, and honorable; or the evils that will follow from an inattention to those principles; there cannot, and ought not, to remain a doubt but the governing rule of right and mutual good must in all public cases finally preside.

The hand of providence has cast us into one common lot, and accomplished the independence of America, by the unanimous consent of the several parts, concurring at once in time, manner and circumstances. No superiority of interest, at the expense of the rest, induced the one, more than the other, into the measure. Virginia and Maryland, it is true, might foresee, that their staple commodity, tobacco, by being no longer monopolized by Britain, would bring them a better price abroad: for as the tax on it in England was treble its first purchase from the planter, and they being now no longer compelled to send it under that obligation, and in the restricted manner they formerly were, it is easy to see, that the article, from the alteration of the circumstances of trade, will, and daily does, turn out to them with additional advantages.

But this being a natural consequence, produced by that common freedom and independence of which all are partakers, is therefore an advantage they are entitled to, and on which the rest of the states can congratulate them without feeling a wish to lessen, but rather to extend it. To contribute to the increased prosperity of another, by the same means which occasion our own, is an agreeable reflection; and the more valuable any article of export becomes, the more riches will be introduced into and spread over the continent.

Yet this is an advantage which those two states derive from the independence of America, superior to the local circumstances of the rest; and of the two it more particularly belongs to Virginia than Maryland, because the staple commodity of a considerable part of Maryland is flour, which, as it is an article that is the growth of Europe as well as of America, cannot obtain a foreign market but by underselling, or at least by limiting it to the current price abroad. But tobacco commands its own price. It is not a plant of almost universal growth, like wheat. There are but few soils and climes that produce it to advantage, and before the cultivation of it in Virginia and Maryland, the price was from four to sixteen shillings sterling a pound in England.*

But the condition of the vacant Western territory of America makes a very different case to that of the circumstances of trade in any of the states. Those very lands, formed, in contemplation, the fund by which the debt of America would in the course of years be redeemed. They were considered as the common right of all; and it is only till lately that any pretension of claims has been made to the contrary.

That difficulties and differences will arise, in communities, ought always to be looked for. The opposition of interests, real or supposed; the variety of judgments; the contrariety of temper; and, in short, the whole composition of man, in his individual capacity, is tinctured with a disposition to contend; but in his social capacity there is either a right, which, being proved, terminates the dispute, or a reasonableness in the measure, where no direct right can be made out, which decides or compromises the matter.

* See Sir Dalby Thomas's Historical Account of the rise and growth of the West-India colonies.

As I shall have frequent occasion to mention the word *right*, I wish to be clearly understood in my definition of it. There are various senses in which this term is used, and custom has, in many of them, afforded it an introduction contrary to its true meaning. We are so naturally inclined to give the utmost degree of force to our own case, that we call every pretension, however founded, *a right*; and by this means the term frequently stands opposed to justice and reason.

After Theodore was elected king of Corsica, not many years ago, by the mere choice of the natives, for their own convenience, in opposing the Genoese, he went over to England, run himself into debt, got himself into jail, and on his release therefrom by the benefit of an act of insolvency, he surrendered up, what he called *his* kingdom of Corsica, as a part of his personal property, for the use of his creditors; some of whom may hereafter call this a charter, or by any other name more fashionable, and ground thereon what they may term a right to the sovereignty and property of Corsica. But does not justice abhor such an action, both in him and them, under the prostituted name of a *right* and must not laughter be excited wherever it is told?

A right, to be truly so, must be right in itself: yet many things have obtained the name of rights, which are originally founded in wrong. Of this kind are all rights by mere conquest, power or violence. In the cool moments of reflection we are obliged to allow, that the mode by which such a right is obtained, is not the best suited to that spirit of universal justice which ought to preside equally over all mankind. There is something in the establishment of such a right, that we wish to slip over as easily as possible, and say as little about as can be. But in the case of a *right founded in right* the mind is carried cheerfully into the subject, feels no compunction, suffers no distress, subjects its sensations to no violence, nor sees any thing in its way which requires an artificial smoothing.

From this introduction I proceed to examine into the claims of Virginia; first, as to the right, secondly, as to the reasonableness, and lastly as to the consequences.

The name, *Virginia*, originally bore a different meaning to what it does now. It stood in the place of the word North-America, and seems to have been intended as a name comprehensive of all the English settlements or colonies on the continent, and not descriptive of any one as distinguish-

ing it from the rest. All to the southward of the Chesapeake, as low as the gulf of Mexico, was called South-Virginia, and all to the northward, North-Virginia, in a similar line of distinction, as we now call the whole continent North and South-America.*

The first charter or patent was to Sir Walter Raleigh by Queen Elizabeth, of England, in the year 1583, and had neither name nor bounds. Upon Sir Walter's return, the name *Virginia*, was given to the whole country, including the now United States. Consequently the present Virginia, either as a province or state, can set up no exclusive claim to the Western territory under this patent, and that for two reasons; first, because the words of the patent run *to Sir Walter Raleigh, and such persons as he should nominate, themselves and their successors;* which is a line of succession Virginia does not pretend to stand in; and secondly, because a prior question would arise, namely, who are to be understood by Virginians under this patent? and the answer would be, all the inhabitants of America, from New-England to Florida.

This patent, therefore, would destroy their exclusive claim, and invest the right collectively in the thirteen states.

But it unfortunately happened, that the settlers under this patent, partly from misconduct, the opposition of the Indians, and other calamities, discontinued the process, and the patent became extinct.

After this, James the first, who, in the year 1602, succeeded Elizabeth, issued a new patent, which I come next to describe.

This patent differed from the former in this essential point, that it had limits, whereas the other had none: the former was intended to promote discoveries wherever they could be made, which accounts why no limits were affixed, and this to settle discoveries already made, which likewise assigns a reason, why limits should be described.

In this patent were incorporated two companies, called the South-Virginia company, and the North-Virginia company, and sometimes the London company, and the Plymouth company.

The South-Virginia or London company was composed chiefly of London adventurers; the North-Virginia of

*Oldmixon's History of Virginia.

Plymouth company was made up of adventurers from Plymouth in Devonshire, and other persons of the western parts of England.

Though they were not to fix together, yet they were allowed to choose their places of settlement any where on the coast of America, then called Virginia, between the latitudes of 34 and 45 degrees, which was a range of 760 miles: the south company was not to go below 34 degrees, nor the north company above 45 degrees. But the patent expressed, that as soon as they had made their choice, each was to become limited to 50 miles each way on the coast, and 100 up the country; so that the grant to each company was a square of 100 miles, and no more. The North-Virginia or Plymouth company settled to the eastward, and in the year 1614, changed the name, and called that part New-England. The South-Virginia or London company settled near Cape Henry.

This then cannot be the patent of boundless extent, and that for two reasons; first, because the limits are described, namely, a square of 100 miles; and secondly, because there were two companies of equal rights included in the same patent.

Three years after this, that is, in the year 1609, the South-Virginia company applied for new powers from the crown of England, which were granted them in a new patent, and the boundaries of the grant enlarged; and this is the charter or patent on which some of the present Virginians ground their pretension to boundless territory.

The first reflection that presents itself on this enlargement of the grant is, that it must be supposed to bear some intended degree of reasonable comparison to that which it superseded. The former could not be greater than a square of one hundred miles; and this new one being granted in lieu of that, and that within the space of three years, and by the same person, James the first, who was never famed either for profusion or generosity, cannot, on a review of the time and circumstances of the grant, be supposed a very extravagant or very extraordinary one. If a square of one hundred miles was not sufficiently large, twice that quantity was as much as could well be expected or solicited: but to suppose that he, who had caution enough to confine the first grant within moderate bounds, should in so short a space as three years, supersede it by another grant of many million times greater

extent, is, on the face of the affair, a circumstantial nullity.

Whether this patent or charter was in existence or not at the time the revolution commenced, is a matter I shall hereafter speak to, and confine myself in this place to the limits which the said patent or charter lays down. The words are as follow:

"Beginning from the cape or point of land called cape or Point Comfort, thence all along the seacoast to the NORTHWARD 200 miles, and from the said point or cape Comfort, all along the seacoast to the *southward*, 200 miles; and all that space or circuit of land lying from the seacoast of the precinct aforesaid up into the land throughout, from sea to sea, WEST and *northwest*."

The first remark I shall offer on the words of this grant is, that they are uncertain, obscure and unintelligible, and may be construed into such a variety of contradictory meanings as to leave at last no meaning at all.

Whether the two hundred miles each way, from cape Comfort were to be on a *straight* line, or ascertained by following the indented *line of the coast*, that is, "*all along the seacoast*," in and out as the coast lay, cannot now be fully determined; because, as either will admit of supposition, and nothing but supposition can be produced, therefore neither can be taken as positive. Thus far may be said, that had it been intended to be a straight line, the word *straight* ought to have been inserted, which would have made the matter clear; but as no inference can be well drawn to the advantage of that which does *not appear* against that which *does*, therefore the omission implies negatively in favor of the coast-indented line, or that the 400 miles were to be traced on the windings of the coast, that is, "*all along the seacoast*."

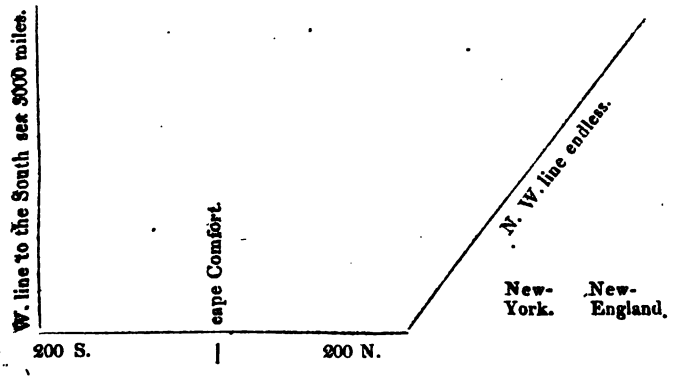
But what is meant by the words "*west and northwest*" is still more unintelligible. Whether they mean a west line and a northwest line, or whether they apply to the general lying of the land from the Atlantic, without regard to lines, cannot again be determined. But if they are supposed to mean lines to be run, then a new difficulty of more magnitude than all the rest arises; namely, from which end of the extent on the coast is the west line and the northwest line to be set off? As the difference in the contents of the grant, occasioned by transposing them is many hundred millions of acres; and either includes or

excludes a far greater quantity of land than the whole thirteen United States contain.

In short there is not a boundary in this grant that is clear, fixed, and defined. The coast line is uncertain, and that being the base on which the others are to be formed, renders the whole uncertain. But even if this line was admitted, in either shape, the other boundaries would still be on supposition, till it might be said there is no boundary at all, and consequently no charter; for words which describe nothing can give nothing.

The advocates for the Virginia claim, laying hold of these ambiguities, have explained the grant thus:

Four hundred miles on the seacoast, and from the south point a west line to the great South sea, and from the north point a northwest line to the said South sea. The figure which these lines produce will be thus:



But why, I ask, must the west land line be set off from the south point, any more than the north point? The grant or patent does not say from which it shall be, neither is it clear that a line is the thing intended by the words: but admitting that it is, on what grounds do the claimants proceed in making this choice? The answer, I presume, is easily given, namely, because it is the most beneficial explanation to themselves they can possibly make; as it takes in many thousand times more extent of country than any other explanation would. But this, though it be a very good reason to them, is a very bad reason to us; and though it may do for the claimants to hope upon, will not answer to plead upon; especially to the very people, who, to

confirm the partiality of the claimants' choice, must relinquish their own right and interest.

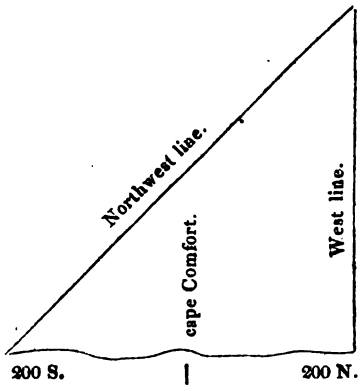
Why not set off the west land line from the north end of the coast line, and the northwest line from the south end of the same? There is some reason why this should be the construction, and none why the other should.

1st, Because if the line of two hundred miles each way from cape Comfort, be traced by following the indented line of the coast, which seems to be the implied intention of the words, and a west line be set off from the north end, and a northwest line from the south end, these lines will all unite (which the other construction never can) and form a complete triangle, the contents of which will be about twenty-nine or thirty millions of acres, or something larger than Pennsylvania; and

2d, Because this construction is following the order of the lines as expressed in the grant; for the *first* mentioned *coast* line, which is to the *northward* of cape Comfort, and the *first* mentioned *land* line, which is the *west* line, have a numerical relation, being the first mentioned of each; and implies, that the west line was to be set off from the *north* point and *not* from the south point: and consequently the *two last* mentioned of each have the same numerical relation, and again implies that the *northwest* line was to be set off from the *south* point, and not from the *north* point. But why the claimants should break through the order of the lines, and contrary to implication, join the *first* mentioned of the *one*, to the last mentioned of the other, and thereby produce a shapeless monster, for which there is no name nor any parallel in the world, either as to extent of soil and sovereignty, is a construction that cannot be supported.

The figure produced by following the order of the lines is as follows:

N. B. If the reader will cast his eye again over the words of the patent on p. 276, he will perceive the numerical relation alluded to, by observing, that the first mentioned coast line and the first mentioned land line are distinguished by CAPITALS. And the last mentioned of each by *italics*, which I have chosen to do to illustrate the explanation.



I presume that if 400 miles be traced by following the inflexes of any seashore, that the two extremes will not be more than 300 miles distant from each other, on a straight line. Therefore, to find the contents of a triangle, whose base is 300 miles, multiply the length of the base into half the perpendicular, which, in this case, is the west line, and the product will be the answer:

300	miles, length of the base.
150	half the perpendicular (supposing it a right-angled triangle.)
15000	
300	
45,000	contents of the grant in square miles.
640	acres in a square mile.
1800000	
270000	
28,800,000	contents in square acres.

Now will any one undertake to say, that this explanation is not as fairly drawn (if not more so) from the words themselves, as any other that can be offered? Because it is not

only justified by the exact words of the patent, grant or charter, or any other name by which it may be called, but by their implied meaning; and is likewise of such contents as may be supposed to have been intended; whereas the claimants' explanation is without bounds, and beyond every thing that is reasonable. Yet after all, who can say what was the precise meaning of terms and expressions so loosely formed, and capable of such a variety of contradictory interpretations?

Had the order of the lines been otherwise than they are in the patent, the reasonableness of the thing must have directed the manner in which they should be connected: but as the claim is founded in unreasonableness, and that unreasonableness endeavored to be supported by a transposition of the lines, there remains no pretence for the claim to stand on.

Perhaps those who are interested in the claimants' explanation will say that as the South sea is spoken of, the lines must be as they explain them, in order to reach it.

To this I reply; first, that no man then knew how far it was from the Atlantic to the South sea, as I shall presently show, but believed it to be but a short distance: and,

Secondly, that the uncertain and ambiguous manner in which the South sea is alluded to (for it is not mentioned by name, but only "*from sea to sea*") serves to perplex the patent, and not to explain it: and as no right can be founded on an ambiguity, but on some proof cleared of ambiguity, therefore the allusive introduction of "from sea to sea" can yield no service to the claim.

There is likewise an ambiguous mention made of *two lands* in this patent, as well as of two *seas; viz.* and all that "*space or circuit of land* lying from the seacoast of the precinct aforesaid up into the *land throughout from sea to sea.*"

On which I remark, that the two lands here mentioned have the appearance of a major and a minor, or the greater out of which the less is to be taken: and the term from "*sea to sea*" may be said to apply descriptively to the *land throughout* and not to the "*space or circuit of land patented to the company:* in a similar manner that a former patent described a major of 706 miles in extent, out of which the minor, or square of one hundred miles, was to be chosen.

But to suppose that because the South sea is darkly alluded to, it must therefore (at whatever distance it might be,

which then nobody knew, or for whatever purpose it might be introduced) be made a certain boundary, and that without regard to the reasonableness of the matter, or the order in which the lines are arranged, which is the only implication the patent gives for setting off the land lines, is a supposition that contradicts every thing which is reasonable.

The figure produced by following the order of the lines will be complete in itself, let the distance to the South sea be more or less; because, if the *land throughout from sea to sea* had not been sufficiently extensive to admit the west land line and the northwest land line to close, the South sea, in that case, would have eventually become a boundary: but if the extent of the *land throughout from sea to sea*, was so great that the lines closed without reaching the said South sea, the figure was complete without it.

Wherefore, as the order of the lines, when raised on the indented coast line, produces a regular figure of reasonable dimensions, and of about the same contents, though not of the same shape, which Virginia now holds within the Allegany mountains; and by transposing them, another figure is produced, for which there is no name, and cannot be completed, as I shall presently explain, and of an extent greater than one half of Europe, it is needless to offer any other arguments to show that the order of the lines must be the rule, if any rule can be drawn from the words, for ascertaining from which point the west line and northwest line were to be set off. Neither is it possible to suppose any other rule could be followed; because a northwest line set off two hundred miles above cape Comfort, would not only never touch the South sea, but would form a spiral line of infinite windings round the globe, and after passing over the northern parts of America and the frozen ocean, and then into the northern parts of Asia, would, when eternity should end and not before, terminate in the north pole.

This is the only manner in which I can express the effect of a northwest line, set off as above; because as its direction must always be between the north and the west, it consequently can never get into the pole nor yet come to a rest, and on the principle that matter or space is capable of being eternally divided, must proceed on for ever.

But it was a prevailing opinion, at the time this patent was obtained, that the South sea was at no great distance from the Atlantic, and therefore it was needless, under that supposition, to regard which way the lines should be run;

neither need we wonder at this error in the English government respecting America then, when we see so many, and such glaring ones now, for which there is much less excuse.

Some circumstances favored this mistake. Admiral Sir Francis Drake not long before this, had, from the top of a mountain in the isthmus of Darien, which is the centre of North and South-America, seen both the South sea and the Atlantic; the width of the part of the continent where he then was, not being above 70 miles, whereas its width opposite Chesapeake bay is as great, if not greater, than in any other part, being from *sea to sea*, about the distance it is from America to England. But this could not then be known, because only two voyages had been made across the South sea; the one by the ship in which Magellan sailed, who died on his passage, and which was the first ship that sailed round the world, and the other by Sir Francis Drake: but as neither of these sailed into a northern latitude in that ocean, high enough to fix the longitude of the western coast of America from the eastern, the distance across was entirely on supposition, and the errors they then ran into appear laughable to us who now know what the distance is.

That the company expected to come at the South sea without much trouble or travelling, and that the great body of land which intervened, so far from being their view in obtaining the charter, became their disappointment, may be collected from a circumstance mentioned in Stith's History of Virginia.

He relates, that in the year 1608, which was at the time the company were soliciting this patent, they fitted up in England "a barge for captain Newport," (who was afterwards one of the joint deputy governors under the very charter we are now treating of) "which, for convenience of carriage, might be taken into five pieces, and with which he and his company were instructed to go up James river as far as the falls thereof, to discover the country of the Monakins, and from thence they were to proceed, *carrying their barge beyond the falls to convey them to the South sea*; being ordered not to return without a lump of gold or a certainty of the said sea."

And Hutchinson, in his history of New-England, which was called North-Virginia at the time this patent was obtained, says, "the geography of this part of America was

less understood than at present. A line to the Spanish settlements was imagined much shorter than it really was. Some of Chaplain's people in the beginning of the last century, who had been but a few days march from Quebec, returned with great joy, supposing that from the top of a high mountain, they had discovered *the South sea.*"

From these matters, which are evidences on record, it appears that the adventurers had no knowledge of the distance it was to the South sea, but supposed it to be no great way from the Atlantic; and also that great extent of territory was not their object, but a short communication with the southern ocean, by which they might get into the neighborhood of the Gold coast, and likewise carry on a commerce with the East-Indies.

Having thus shown the confused and various interpretations this charter is subject to, and that it may be made to mean any thing and nothing; I proceed to show, that, let the limits of it be more or less, the present state of Virginia does not, and cannot, as a matter of right, inherit under it.

I shall open this part of the subject by putting the following case:

Either Virginia stands in succession to the London company, to whom the charter was granted, or to the crown of England. If to the London company, then it becomes her, as an outset in the matter, to show who they were, and likewise that they were in possession to the commencement of the revolution.—If to the crown, then the charter is of consequence superseded; because the crown did not possess territories by charter, but by prerogative without charter. The notion of the crown chartering to itself is a nullity; and in this case, the unpossessed lands, be they little or much, are in the same condition as if they never had been chartered at all; and the sovereignty of them devolves to the sovereignty of the United States.

The charter or patent of 1609, as well as that of 1606, was to Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, the Rev. Richard Hacluit, prebend of Westminster, and others; and the government was then proprietary. These proprietors, by virtue of the charter of 1709, chose lord Delaware for their governor, and Sir Thomas Gates, Sir George Summers, and captain Newport, (the person who was to go with a boat to the South sea,) joint deputy governors.

Was this the form of government either as to soil or constitution at the time the present revolution commenced? If

not, the charter was not *in being*; for it matters not to us how it came to be *out of being*, so long as the present Virginians, or their ancestors, neither are nor were sufferers by the change then made.

But suppose it could be proved to be in being, which it cannot, because *being*, in a charter, is power, it would only prove a right in behalf of the London company of adventurers, but how that right is to be disposed of is another question. We are not defending the right of the London company, deceased 150 years ago, but taking up the matter at the place where we found it, and so far as the authority of the crown of England was exercised when the revolution commenced.

The charter was a contract between the crown of England and those adventurers for their own emolument, and not between the crown and the people of Virginia; and whatever was the occasion of the contract becoming void, or surrendered up, or superseded, makes no part of the question now. It is sufficient that when the United States succeeded to sovereignty they found no such contract in existence or even in litigation. They found Virginia under the authority of the crown of England, both as to soil and government, subject to quit-rents to the crown and not to the company, and had been so for upwards of 150 years: and that an instrument or deed of writing, of a private nature, as all proprietary contracts are, so far as land is concerned, and which is now only historically known, and in which Virginia was no party, and to which no succession in any line can be proved, and has ceased for 150 years, should now be raked from oblivion and held up as a charter whereon to assume a right to boundless territory, and that by a perversion of the order of it, is something very singular and extraordinary.

If there was any innovation on the part of the crown, the contest rested between the crown and the proprietors, the London company, and not between Virginia and the said crown. It was not her charter; it was the company's charter, and the only parties in the case were the crown and the company.

But why, if Virginia contends for the immutability of charters, has she selected this in preference to the two former ones? All her arguments, arising from this principle, must go to the first charter and not to the last; but by

placing them to the last, instead of the first, she admits a fact against her principle; because, in order to establish the last, she proves the first to be vacated by the second in the space of 23 years, the second to be vacated by the third in the space of 3 years; and why the third should not be vacated by the fourth form of government, issuing from the same power with the former two and which took place about 25 years after, and continued in being for 150 years since, and under which all her public and private business was transacted, her purchases made, her warrants for survey and patents for land obtained, is too mysterious to account for.

Either the re-assumption of the London company's charter into the hands of the crown was an usurpation, or it was not. If it was, then, strictly speaking, is every thing which Virginia has done under that usurpation illegal, and she may be said to have lived in the most curious species of rebellion ever known; rebellion against the London company of adventurers. For if the charter to the company (for it was not to the Virginians) ought to be in being now, it ought to have been in being then; and why she should admit its vacation then and reject it now, is unaccountable; or why she should esteem her purchases of lands good which were *then* made contrary to this charter, and now contend for the operation of the same charter to possess new territory by, are circumstances which cannot be reconciled.

But whether the charter, as it is called, ought to be extinct or not, cannot make a question with us. All the parties concerned in it are deceased, and no successors, in any regular line of succession, appear to claim. Neither the London company of adventurers, their heirs or assigns, were in possession of the exercise of this charter at the commencement of the revolution; and therefore the state of Virginia does not, in point of fact, succeed to and inherit from the company.

But say they, we succeed to and inherit from the crown of England, which was the immediate possessor of the sovereignty at the time we entered, and had been so for 150 years.

To say this, is to say there is no charter at all. A charter is an assurance from one party to another, and cannot be from the same party to itself.

But before I enter further on this case I shall concisely state how this charter came to be re-assumed by the power which granted it, the crown of England.

I have already stated that it was a proprietary charter, or grant, to Sir Thomas Gates and others, who were called the London company, and sometimes the South-Virginia company, to distinguish them from those who settled to the eastward (now New-England) and were then called the North-Virginia or Plymouth company.

Oldmixon's History of Virginia (in his account of the British empire in America) published in the year 1708, gives a concise progress of the affair. He attributes it to the misconduct, contentions and mismanagement of the proprietors, and their innovations upon the Indians, which had so exasperated them, that they fell on the settlers and destroyed at one time 334 men, women and children.

"Some time after this massacre," says he, "several gentlemen in England procured grants of land from the company, and others came over on their private accounts to make settlements; among the former was one captain Martin, who was named to be of the council. This man raised so many differences among them, that new distractions followed, which the Indians observing, took heart and once more fell upon the settlers on the borders, destroying, without pitying either age, sex, or condition.

"These and other calamities being chiefly imputed to the mismanagement of the proprietors, whose losses had so discouraged most of their best members, that they sold their shares, and Charles I. on his accession to the throne dissolved the company, and took the colony into his own immediate direction. He appointed the governor and council himself, ordered all patents and processes to issue in his own name, and reserved a quit-rent of two shillings sterling for every hundred acres."

Thus far our author. Now it is impossible for us at this distance of time to say what were all the exact causes of the change; neither have we any business with it. The company might surrender it, or they might not, or they might forfeit it by not fulfilling conditions, or they might sell it, or the crown might, as far as we know, take it from them. But what are either of these cases to Virginia, or any other which can be produced. She was not a party in the matter. It was not her charter, neither can she ingraft any right upon it, or suffer any injury under it.

If the charter was vacated it must have been by the London company; if it was surrendered it must be by the same; and if it was sold nobody else could sell it, and if it was taken from them nobody else could lose it; and yet Virginia calls this her charter, which it was not within her power to hold, to sell, to vacate, or to lose.

But if she puts her right upon the ground that it never was sold, surrendered, lost, or vacated, by the London company, she admits that if they *had* sold, surrendered, lost, or vacated it, it would have become extinct, and to her no charter at all. And in this case, the only thing to prove is the fact, which is, has this charter been the rule of government, and of purchasing or procuring unappropriated lands in Virginia, from the time it was granted to the time of the revolution? Answer—the charter has not been the rule of government, nor of purchasing and procuring lands, neither has any lands been purchased or procured under its sanction or authority for upwards of 150 years.

But if she goes a step further, and says, that they could not vacate, surrender, sell, or lose it, by any act they could do, so neither could they vacate, surrender, sell, or lose that of 1606, which was three years prior to this; and this argument, so far from establishing the charter of 1609, would destroy it; and in its stead confirm the preceding one which limited the company to a square of 100 miles. And if she still goes back to that of Sir Walter Raleigh, *that* only places her in the light of Americans in common with all.

The only fact that can be clearly proved is, that the crown of England exercised the power of dominion and government in Virginia, and of the disposal of the lands, and that the charter had neither been the rule of government or purchasing land for upwards of 150 years, and this places Virginia in succession to the crown and not to the company. Consequently it proves a lapse of the charter into the hands of the crown by some means or other.

Now to suppose that the charter could return into the hands of the crown and yet remain in force, is to suppose that a man could be bound by a bond of obligation to himself.

Its very *being* in the hands of the crown from which it issued, is a cessation of its existence; and an effectual unchartering all that part of the grant which was not before

disposed of. And consequently the state of Virginia standing thus in succession to the crown, can be entitled to no more extent of country as a state under the union, than what it possessed as a province under the crown. And all lands exterior to these bounds, as well of Virginia as the rest of the states, devolve, in the order of succession, to the sovereignty of the United States, for the benefit of all.

And this brings the case to what were the limits of Virginia as a province under the crown of England.

Charter it had none. Its limits then rested at the discretion of the authority to which it was subject. Maryland and Pennsylvania became its boundary to the eastward and northward, and North-Carolina to the southward, therefore the boundary to the westward was the only principal line to be ascertained.

As Virginia from a proprietary soil and government was become what then bore the name of a royal one, the extent of the province, as the order of things then stood (for something must always be admitted whereon to form a beginning) was wholly at the disposal of the crown of England, who might enlarge, or diminish, or erect new governments to the westward, by the same authoritative right that Virginia now can divide a county into two, if too large, or too inconvenient.

To say, as has been said, that Pennsylvania, Maryland and North-Carolina, were taken out of Virginia, is no more than to say, they were taken out of America; because Virginia was the common name of all the country, north and south: and to say they were taken out of the chartered limits of Virginia, is likewise to say nothing; because after the dissolution or extinction of the proprietary company, there was nobody to whom any provincial limits became chartered. The extinction of the company was the extinction of the chartered limits. The patent could not survive the company, because it was to them a right, which, when they expired, ceased to be any body's else in their stead.

But to return to the western boundary of Virginia at the commencement of the revolution.

Charters, like proclamations, were the sole act of the crown, and if the former were adequate to fix limits to the lands which it gave away, sold or otherwise disposed of, the latter were equally adequate to fix limits or divisions to those which it retained; and therefore, the western

limits of Virginia, as the proprietary company was extinct and consequently the patent with it, must be looked for in the line of proclamations.

I am not fond of quoting these old remains of former arrogance, but as we must begin somewhere, and as the states have agreed to regulate the right of each state to territory, by the condition each stood in with the crown of England at the commencement of the revolution, we have no other rule to go by; and any rule which can be agreed on is better than none.

From the proclamation then of 1763, the western limits of Virginia, as a province under the crown of England, are described so as not to extend beyond the heads of any of the rivers which empty themselves into the Atlantic, and consequently the limits did not pass over the Allegany mountains.

The following is an extract from the proclamation of 1763, so far as respects boundary:

"And whereas it is *just* and *reasonable* and *essential to our interest*, and the security of our colonies, that the several nations or tribes of Indians, with whom we are connected, and who live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our dominions and territories, *as, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us, are reserved to them or any of them as their hunting grounds;* we do therefore, with the advice of our privy council, declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that no governor, or commander-in-chief, in any of our colonies of Quebec, East-Florida, or West-Florida, do presume upon any pretence whatever, to grant warrants of survey, or pass any patents for lands beyond the bounds of their respective governments, as described in their commissions: as ALSO that no governor or commander-in-chief of our colonies or plantations in America, do presume, for the present, and until our further pleasure be known, to grant warrants of survey or pass patents for any lands *beyond the heads or sources of any of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic ocean from the west or northwest*, or upon any lands whatever, *which not having been ceded to, or purchased by us, as aforesaid, are reserved unto the said Indians or any of them.*

"And we do further declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, for the present, as aforesaid, to reserve under our sovereignty, protection and dominion, *for the use of the said Indians, all the lands and territories*, not included within

the limits of our said three new governments, or within the limits of the territory granted to the Hudson's bay company; as also, *all the lands and territories lying to the westward of the sources of the rivers, which fall into the sea from the west and northwest as aforesaid;* and we do hereby strictly forbid, on pain of our displeasure, all our loving subjects from making any purchases or settlements whatever, or taking possession of any of the lands above reserved, without our especial leave and license for that purpose first obtained.

"And we do further strictly enjoin and require all persons whatever, who have either wilfully or inadvertently seated themselves upon any lands within the countries above described, or upon any other lands, *which, not having been ceded to, or purchased by us*, are still reserved to the said Indians, as aforesaid, forthwith to remove themselves from such settlements."

It is easy for us to understand, that the frequent and plausible mention of the Indians was only a pretext to create an idea of the humanity of government. The object and intention of the proclamation was the western boundary, which is here signified not to extend beyond the heads of the rivers: and these, then, are the western limits which Virginia had as a province under the crown of Britain.

And agreeable to the intention of this proclamation and the limits described thereby, lord Hillsborough, then secretary of state in England, addressed an official letter, of the 31st of July, 1770, to lord Bottetourt, at that time governor of Virginia, which letter was laid before the council of Virginia by Mr. president Nelson, and by him answered on the 18th of October in the same year, of which the following are extracts:

"On the evening of the day your lordship's letter to the governor was delivered to me (as it contains matters of great variety and importance) it was read in council, and, together with the several papers inclosed, it hath been maturely considered, and I now trouble your lordship with theirs as well as my own opinion upon the subject of them.

"We do not presume to say to whom our gracious sovereign shall grant his vacant lands," and "with regard to the establishment of a *new colony on the back of Virginia*, it is a subject of too great political importance for

me to presume to give an opinion upon, however, permit me, my lord, to observe, that when that part of the country shall become sufficiently populated it may be a wise and prudent measure."

On the death of lord Bottetourt, lord Dunmore was appointed to the government, and he, either from ignorance of the subject, or other motives, made a grant of some lands on the Ohio to certain of his friends and favorites, which produced the following letter from lord Dartmouth, who succeeded lord Hillsborough as secretary of state:

"I think fit to inclose your lordship a copy of lord Hillsborough's letter to lord Bottetourt, of the 31st of July, 1770, the receipt of which was acknowledged by Mr. president Nelson, a few days before lord Bottetourt's death, and appears by his answer to it, to have been laid before the council. That board, therefore, could not be ignorant of what has passed here upon Mr. Walpole's application, nor of the king's express command, contained in lord Hillsborough's letter, that no lands should be granted beyond the limits of the royal proclamation of 1763, until the king's further pleasure was signified; and I have only to observe, that it must have been a very extraordinary neglect in them not to have informed your lordship of that letter and those orders."

On these documents I shall make no remarks. They are their own evidence, and show what the limits of Virginia were while a British province; and as there was then no other authority by which they could be fixed, and as the grant to the London company could not be a grant to any but themselves, and of consequence ceased to be when they ceased to exist, it remained a matter of choice in the crown, on its re-assumption of the lands, to limit or divide them into separate governments, as it judged best, and from which there was not, and could not, in the order of government, be any appeal. Neither was Virginia, as a province, affected by it, because the monies, in any case, arising from the sale of lands, did not go into her treasury; and whether to the crown or to the proprietors was to her indifferent. And it is likewise evident, from the secretary's letter, and the president's answer, that it was in contemplation to lay out a new colony on the *back* of Virginia, between the Allegany mountains and the Ohio.

Having thus gone through the several charters, or grants, and their relation to each other, and shown that

Virginia cannot stand in succession to a private grant, which has been extinct for upwards of 150 years—and that the western limits of Virginia, at the commencement of the revolution, were at the heads of the rivers emptying themselves into the Atlantic, none of which are beyond the Allegany mountains; I now proceed to the second part, namely,

The reasonableness of her claims.

Virginia, as a British province, stood in a different situation with the crown of England to any of the other provinces, because she had no ascertained limits, but such as arose from the laying off new provinces and the proclamation of 1763. For the same name, Virginia, as I have before mentioned, was the general name of all the country, and the dominion out of which the several governments were laid off: and in strict propriety, conformable to the origin of names, the province of Virginia was taken out of the dominion of Virginia. For the term, *dominion*, could not appertain to the province, which retained the name of Virginia, but to the crown, and from thence was applied to the whole country, and signified its being an appendage to the crown of England, as they say now, "*our dominion of Wales.*"

It is not possible to suppose there could exist an idea that Virginia, as a British province, was to be extended to the South sea, at the distance of three thousand miles. The dominion, as appertaining at that time to the crown, might be claimed to extend so far, but as a province the thought was not conceivable, nor the practice possible.

And it is more than probable, that the deception made use of to obtain the patent of 1609, by representing the South sea to be near where the Allegany mountains are, was one cause of its becoming extinct; and it is worthy of remarking, that no history (at least that I have met with) mentions any dispute or litigation, between the crown and the company in consequence of the extinction of the patent, and the re-assumption of the lands; and therefore the negative evidence corroborating with the positive, make it, as certain as such a case can possibly be, that either the company received a compensation for the patent, or quitted it quietly, ashamed of the imposition they had practised, and their subsequent mal-administration. Men are not inclined to give up a claim where there is any ground to contend upon, and the silence in which the patent expired is a

presumptive proof that its fate, from whatever cause, was just.

There is one general policy which seems to have prevailed with the English in laying off new governments, which was, not to make them larger than their own country, that they might the easier hold them manageable: this was the case with every one except Canada, the extension of whose limits was for the politic purpose of recognizing new acquisitions of territory, not immediately convenient for colonization.

But, in order to give this matter a chance through all its cases, I will admit what no man can suppose, which is, that there is an English charter that fixes Virginia to extend from the Atlantic to the South sea, and contained within a due west line, set off two hundred miles below cape Comfort, and a northwest line, set off two hundred miles above it. Her side, then, on the Atlantic (according to an explanation given in Mr. Bradford's paper of Sept. 29, 1779, by an advocate for the Virginia claims) will be four hundred miles; her side to the south three thousand; her side to the west four thousand; and her northwest line about five thousand; and the quantity of land contained within these dimensions will be almost four thousand millions of acres, which is more than ten times the quantity contained within the present United States, and above an hundred times greater than the kingdom of England.

To reason on a case like this, is such a waste of time, and such an excess of folly, that it ought not to be reasoned upon. It is impossible to suppose that any patent to private persons could be so intentionally absurd, and the claim grounded thereon, is as wild as any thing the imagination of man ever conceived.

But if, as I before mentioned, there was a charter which bore such an explanation, and Virginia stood in succession to it, what would that be to us, any more than the will of Alexander, had he taken it into his head to have bequeathed away the world? Such a charter, or grant must have been obtained by imposition and a false representation of the country, or granted in error, or both; and in any of, or all, these cases, the United States must reject the matter as something they cannot know, for the merits will not bear an argument, and the pretension of right stands upon no better ground.

Our case is an original one; and many matters attending it must be determined on their own merits and reasonableness. The territory of the rest of the states is, in general, within known bounds of moderate extent, and the quota which each state is to furnish towards the expense and service of the war, must be ascertained upon some rule of comparison. The number of inhabitants of each state formed the first rule; and it was naturally supposed that those numbers bore nearly the same proportion to each other, which the territory of each state did. Virginia on this scale, would be about one fifth larger than Pennsylvania, which would be as much dominion as any state could manage with happiness and convenience.

When I first began this subject, my intention was to be extensive on the merits, and concise on the matter of the right; instead of which, I have been extensive on the matter of right, and concise on the merits of reasonableness: and this alteration in my design arose, consequentially, from the nature of the subject; for as a reasonable thing the claim can be supported by no argument, and therefore needs none to refute it; but as there is a strange propensity in mankind to shelter themselves under the sanction of a right, however unreasonable that supposed right may be, I found it most conducive to the interest of the case, to show, that the right stands upon no better grounds than the reason. And shall therefore proceed to make some observations on the consequences of the claim.

The claim being unreasonable in itself and standing on no ground of right, but such as, if true, must from the quarter it is drawn, be offensive, has a tendency to create disgust and sour the minds of the rest of the states. Those lands are capable, under the management of the United States, of repaying the charges of the war, and some of them, as I shall hereafter show, may, I presume, be made an immediate advantage of.

I distinguish three different descriptions of land in America at the commencement of the revolution. Proprietary or chartered lands, as was the case in Pennsylvania: crown lands, within the described limits of any of the crown governments; and crown residuary lands, that were without, or beyond the limits of any province; and those last were held in reserve whereon to erect new governments and lay out new provinces; as appears to have been the design by lord Hillsborough's letter and the president's answer,

wherein he says, "with respect to the establishment of a *new* colony on the *back* of Virginia, it is a subject of too great political importance for me to presume to give an opinion upon; however, permit me, my lord, to observe, that when that part of the country shall become populated it may be a wise and prudent measure."

The expression is, a "*new colony* on the *back* of Virginia;" and referred to lands between the heads of the rivers and the Ohio. This is a proof that those lands were not considered within, but beyond the limits of Virginia, as a colony; and the other expression in the letter is equally descriptive, namely, "*We do not presume to say, to whom our gracious sovereign shall grant his vacant lands.*" Certainly then, the same right, which, at that time, rested in the crown, rests now in the more supreme authority of the United States; and therefore, addressing the president's letter to the circumstances of the revolution, it will run thus:

"We do not presume to say to whom the *sovereign United States* shall grant their vacant lands, and with respect to the settlement of a *new colony* on the *back* of Virginia, it is a matter of too much political importance for me to give an opinion upon; however, permit me to observe, that when that part of the country shall become populated it may be a wise and prudent measure."

It must occur to every person, on reflection, that those lands are too distant to be within the government of any of the present states; and, I may presume to suppose, that were a calculation justly made, Virginia has lost more by the decrease of taxables, than she has gained by what lands she has made sale of; therefore, she is not only doing the rest of the states wrong in point of equity, but herself and them an injury in point of strength, service and revenue.

It is only the United States, and not any single state, that can lay off new states and incorporate them in the union by representation; therefore, the situation which the settlers on those lands will be in, under the assumed right of Virginia, will be hazardous and distressing, and they will feel themselves at last like the aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, their habitations unsafe and their title precarious.

And when men reflect on that peace, harmony, quietude and security, which is necessary to prosperity, especially in making new settlements, and think that when the war

shall be ended, their happiness and safety will depend on a union with the states, and not a scattered people, unconnected with, and politically unknown to the rest, they will feel but little inclination to put themselves in a situation, which, however solitary and recluse, it may appear at present, will then be uncertain and unsafe and their troubles will have to begin where those of the United States shall end.

It is probable that some of the inhabitants of Virginia may be inclined to suppose, that the writer of this, by taking up the subject in the manner he has done, is arguing unfriendly against their interest. To which he wishes to reply:

That the most extraordinary part of the whole is, that Virginia should countenance such a claim. For it is worthy of observing, that, from the beginning of the contest with Britain, and long after, there was not a people in America who discovered, through all the variety and multiplicity of public business, a greater fund of true wisdom, fortitude, and disinterestedness, than the then colony of Virginia. They were loved—They were reverenced. Their investigation of the assumed rights of Britain had a sagacity which was uncommon. Their reasonings were piercing, difficult to be equalled and impossible to be refuted, and their public spirit was exceeded by none. But since this unfortunate land scheme has taken place, their powers seem to be absorbed; a torpor has overshaded them and every one asks, What is become of Virginia?

It seldom happens that the romantic schemes of extensive dominion are of any service to a government, and never to a people. They assuredly end at last in loss, trouble, division and disappointment. And was even the title of Virginia good, and the claim admissible, she would derive more lasting and real benefit by participating it, than by attempting the management of an object so infinitely beyond her reach. Her share with the rest, under the supremacy of the United States, which is the only authority adequate to the purpose, would be worth more to her than what the whole would produce under the management of herself alone. And that for several reasons:

1st, Because her claim not being admissible nor yet manageable, she cannot make a good title to the purchasers and consequently can get but little for the lands.

2d, Because the distance the settlers will be from her, will immediately put them out of all government and protection, so far, at least as relates to Virginia: and by this means she will render her frontiers a refuge to desperadoes, and a hiding place from justice; and the consequence will be perpetual unsafety to her own peace, and that of the neighboring states.

3d, Because her quota of expense for carrying on the war, admitting her to engross such an immensity of territory, would be greater than she can either support or supply, and could not be less, upon a reasonable rule of proportion, than nine-tenths of the whole. And,

4th. Because she must sooner or later relinquish them; therefore to see her own interest wisely at first, is preferable to the alternative of finding it out by misfortune at last.

I have now gone through my examination of the claim of Virginia, in every case which I proposed; and for several reasons wish the lot had fallen to another person.

But as this is a most important matter, in which all are interested, and the substantial good of Virginia not injured but promoted, and as few men have leisure, and still fewer have inclination, to go into intricate investigation, I have at last ventured on the subject.

The succession of the United States to the vacant Western territory is a right they originally sat out upon; and in the pamphlet Common Sense, I frequently mentioned those lands as a national fund for the benefit of all; therefore, resuming the subject where I then left off, I shall conclude with concisely reducing to system what I then only hinted.

In my last piece, the Crisis No. XVI. I estimated the annual amount of the charge of war and the support of the several governments at two million pounds sterling, and the peace establishment at three quarters of a million, and, by a comparison of the taxes of this country with those of England, proved that the whole yearly expense to us, to defend the country, is but a third of what Britain would have drawn from us by taxes, had she succeeded in her attempt to conquer; and our peace establishment only an eighth part; and likewise showed, that it was within the ability of the states to carry on the whole of the war by taxation, without having recourse to any other modes or funds. To have a clear idea of taxation is necessary to every country, and the more funds we can discover and

organize, the less will be the hope of the enemy, and the readier their disposition to peace, which it is now *their* interest more than *ours* to promote.

I have already remarked, that only the United States and not any particular state can lay off new states and incorporate them into the union by representation; keeping, therefore, this idea in view, I ask, might not a substantial fund be quickly created by laying off a new state, so as to contain between twenty and thirty millions of acres, and opening a land-office in all the countries in Europe for hard money, and in this country for supplies in kind, at a certain price.

The tract of land that seems best adapted to answer this purpose is contained between the Allegany mountains and the river Ohio, as far north as the Pennsylvania line, thence extending down the said river to the falls thereof, thence due south into the latitude of the North-Carolina line, and thence east to the Allegany mountains aforesaid. I the more readily mention this tract, because it is fighting the enemy with their own weapons, as it includes the same ground on which a new colony would have been erected, for the emolument of the crown of England, as appears by the letters of lords Hillsborough and Dartmouth, had not the revolution prevented its being carried into effect.

It is probable that there may be some spots of private property within this tract, but to incorporate them into some government will render them more profitable to the owners, and the condition of the scattered settlers more eligible and happy than at present.

If twenty millions of acres of this new state be patented and sold at twenty pounds sterling per hundred acres they will produce four million pounds sterling, which, if applied to continental expenses only, will support the war for three years, should Britain be so unwise as to prosecute it against her own direct interest and against the interest and policy of all Europe. The several states will then have to raise taxes for their internal government only, and the continental taxes as soon as the fund begins to operate, will lessen, and if sufficiently productive, will cease.

Lands are the real riches of the habitable world, and the natural funds of America. The funds of other countries are, in general, artificially constructed; the creatures of necessity and contrivance; dependant upon credit, and always exposed to hazard and uncertainty. But lands can

neither be annihilated nor lose their value; on the contrary, they universally rise with population, and rapidly so; when under the security of effectual government. But this it is impossible for Virginia to give, and therefore, that which is capable of defraying the expenses of the empire, will, under the management of any single state, produce only a fugitive support to wandering individuals.

I shall now inquire into the effects which the laying out a new state, under the authority of the United States will have upon Virginia.

It is the very circumstance she ought to, and must, wish for, when she examines the matter in all its bearings and consequences.

The present settlers beyond her reach, and her supposed authority over them remaining in herself, they will appear to her as revolters, and she to them as oppressors; and this will produce such a spirit of mutual dislike, that in a little time a total disagreement will take place, to the disadvantage of both.

But under the authority of the United States the matter is manageable, and Virginia will be eased of a disagreeable consequence.

Besides this, a sale of the lands, continentally, for the purpose of supporting the expense of the war, will save her a greater share of taxes, than the small sale which she could make herself, and the small price she could get for them would produce.

She would likewise have two advantages which no other state in the union enjoys; first, a frontier state for her defence against the incursions of the Indians; and the second is, that the laying out and peopling a new state on the back of an old one, situated as she is, is doubling the quantity of its trade.

The new state which is here proposed to be laid out, may send its exports down the Mississippi, but its imports must come through Chesapeake bay, and consequently Virginia will become the market for the new state; because, though there is a navigation from it, there is none into it, on account of the rapidity of the Mississippi.

There are certain circumstances that will produce certain events whether men think of them or not. The events do not depend upon thinking, but are the natural consequence of acting; and according to the system which Virginia has gone upon, the issue will be, that she will get

involved with the back settlers in a contention about *rights*, till they dispute with their own claims; and, soured by the contention, will go to any other state for their commerce; both of which may be prevented, a perfect harmony established, the strength of the states increased, and the expenses of the war defrayed, by settling the matter now on the plan of a general right; and every day it is delayed the difficulty will be increased and the advantages lessened.

But if it should happen, as it possibly may, that the war should end before the money which the new state may produce be expended, the remainder of the lands therein may be set apart to reimburse those, whose houses have been burnt by the enemy, as this is a species of suffering which it was impossible to prevent, because houses are not moveable property; and it ought not to be, that because we cannot do every thing, that we ought not to do what we can.

Having said thus much on the subject, I think it necessary to remark, that the prospect of a new fund, so far from abating our endeavors in making every immediate provision for the army, ought to quicken us therein; for should the states see it expedient to go upon the measure, it will be at least a year before it can be productive. I the more freely mention this, because, there is a dangerous species of popularity, which, I fear, some men are seeking from their constituents by giving them grounds to believe, that if they are elected they will lighten the taxes; a measure, which in the present state of things, cannot be done without exposing the country to the ravages of the enemy by disabling the army from defending it.

Where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime; and if any man whose duty it was to know better, has encouraged such an expectation, he has either deceived himself or them: besides, no country can be defended without expense, and let any man compare his portion of temporary inconveniences arising from taxation, with the real distresses of the army for the want of supplies, and the difference is not only sufficient to strike him dumb, but make him thankful that worse consequences have not followed.

In advancing this doctrine, I speak with an honest freedom to the country; for as it is their good to be defended, so it is their interest to provide that defence, at least, till other funds can be organized.

As the laying out new states will some time or other be the business of the country, and as it is yet a new business to us, and as the influence of the war has scarcely afforded leisure for reflecting on distant circumstances, I shall throw together a few hints for facilitating that measure whenever it may be proper for adopting it.

The United States now standing on the line of sovereignty, the vacant territory is their property collectively, but the persons by whom it may hereafter be peopled will also have an equal right with ourselves; and therefore, as new states shall be laid off and incorporated with the present, they will become partakers of the remaining territory with us who are already in possession. And this consideration ought to heighten the value of lands to new emigrants; because, in making the purchases, they not only gain an immediate property, but become initiated into the right and heirship of the states to a property in reserve, which is an additional advantage to what any purchasers under the late government of England enjoyed.

The setting off the boundary of any new state will naturally be the first step, and as it must be supposed not to be peopled at the time it is laid off, a constitution must be formed by the United States, as the rule of government in any new state, for a certain term of years (perhaps ten) or until the state becomes peopled to a certain number of inhabitants; after which, the whole and sole right of modelling their government to rest with themselves.

A question may arise, whether a new state should immediately possess an equal right with the present ones in all cases which may come before congress.

This, experience will best determine; but at a first view of the matter it appears thus; that it ought to be immediately incorporated into the union on the ground of a family right, such a state standing in the line of a younger child of the same stock; but as new emigrants will have something to learn when they first come to America, and a new state requiring aid rather than capable of giving it, it might be most convenient to admit its immediate representation into congress, there to sit, hear and debate on all questions and matters, but not to vote on any till after the expiration of seven years.

I shall in this place take the opportunity of renewing a hint which I formerly threw out in the pamphlet Common Sense, and which the several states will, sooner or later,

see the convenience if not the necessity of adopting; which is, that of electing a continental convention, for the purpose of forming a continental constitution, defining and describing the powers and authority of congress.

Those of entering into treaties, and making peace, they naturally possess, in behalf of the states, for their separate as well as their united good, but the internal control and dictatorial powers of congress are not sufficiently defined, and appear to be too much in some cases and too little in others; and therefore, to have them marked out legally will give additional energy to the whole, and a new confidence to the several parts.

END OF PUBLIC GOOD.

LETTER

TO THE

ABBE RAYNAL,

ON THE AFFAIRS OF NORTH-AMERICA: IN WHICH

THE MISTAKES IN THE ABBE'S ACCOUNT

OF THE

REVOLUTION OF AMERICA

ARE CORRECTED AND CLEARED UP.

INTRODUCTION.

A LONDON translation of an original work in French, by the abbe Raynal, which treats of the revolution of North-America, having been re-printed in Philadelphia and other parts of the continent, and as the distance at which the abbe is placed from the American theatre of war and politics, has occasioned him to mistake several facts, or, misconceive the causes or principles by which they were produced, the following tract, therefore, is published with a view to rectify them, and prevent even accidental errors from intermixing with history, under the sanction of time and silence.

The editor of the London edition has entitled it, "*The Revolution of America*, by the ABBE RAYNAL," and the American printers have followed the example. But I have understood, and I believe my information just, that the piece, which is more properly reflections on the revolution, was unfairly purloined from the printer which the abbe employed, or from the manuscript copy, and is only part of a larger work then in the press, or preparing for it. The person who procured it, appears to have been an Englishman, and though, in an advertisement prefixed to the London edition, he has endeavored to gloss over the embezzlement with professions of patriotism, and to soften it with

high encomiums on the author, yet the action in any view, in which it can be placed, is illiberal and unpardonable.

"In the course of his travels," says he, "the translator happily succeeded in obtaining a copy of this exquisite little piece, which has not yet made its appearance from any press. He publishes a French edition, in favor of those who feel its eloquent reasoning more forcibly in its native language, at the same time with the following translation of it; in which he has been desirous, perhaps in vain, that all the warmth, the grace, the strength, the dignity of the original, should not be lost. And he flatters himself, that the indulgence of the illustrious historian will not be wanting to a man, who, of his own motion, has taken the liberty to give this composition to the public, only from a strong persuasion, that its momentous argument will be useful in a critical conjuncture, to that country which he loves with an ardor, that can be exceeded only by the nobler flame, which burns in the bosom of the philanthropic author, for the freedom and happiness of all the countries upon earth."

This plausibility of setting off a dishonorable action, may pass for patriotism and sound principles with those who do not enter into its demerits, and whose interest is not injured nor their happiness affected thereby. But it is more than probable, notwithstanding the declarations it contains, that the copy was obtained for the sake of profiting by the sale of a new and popular work, and that the professions are but a garb to the fraud.

It may with propriety be remarked, that in all countries where literature is protected, and it never can flourish where it is not, the works of an author are his legal property; and to treat letters in any other light than this, is to banish them from the country or strangle them in the birth.—The embezzlement from the abbe Raynal, was, it is true, committed by one country upon another, and therefore shows no defect in the laws of either. But it is never-

theless a breach of civil manners and literary justice; neither can it be any apology, that because the countries are at war, literature shall be entitled to depredation.*

But the forestalling the abbe's publication by London editions, both in French and English and thereby not only defrauding him and throwing an expensive publication on his hands by anticipating the sale, are only the smaller injuries which such conduct may occasion. A man's opinions, whether written or in thought, are his own until he pleases to publish them himself; and it is adding cruelty to injustice, to make him the author of what future reflection, or better information, might occasion him to suppress or amend. There are declarations and sentiments in the abbe's piece, which for my own part, I did not expect to find, and such as himself on a revisal, might have seen occasion to change; but the anticipated piracy effectually prevented his having the opportunity, and precipitated him into difficulties, which, had it not been for such ungenerous fraud, might not have happened.

This mode of making an author appear before his time, will appear still more ungenerous, when we consider how very few men there are in any country, who can at once and without the aid of reflection and revisal, combine warm passions with a cool temper, and the full expansion of the imagination with the natural and necessary gravity of judgment, so as to be rightly balanced within themselves, and to make a reader feel, fancy, and understand justly at the same time. To call three powers of the mind into action

* The state of literature in America must one day become a subject of legislative consideration. Hitherto it hath been a disinterested volunteer in the service of the revolution, and no man thought of profits: but when peace shall give time and opportunity for study, the country will deprive itself of the honor and service of letters and the improvement of science, unless sufficient laws are made to prevent depredations on literary property. It is well worth remarking, that Russia, who but a few years ago was scarcely known in Europe, owes a large share of her present greatness to the close attention she has paid, and the wise encouragement she has given, to every branch of science and learning: and we have almost the same instance in France, in the reign of Louis XIV.

at once, in a manner that neither shall interrupt, and that each shall aid and invigorate the other, is a talent very rarely possessed.

It often happens that the weight of an argument is lost by the wit of setting it off; or the judgment disordered by an intemperate irritation of the passions: yet a certain degree of animation must be felt by the writer, and raised in the reader, in order to interest the attention; and a sufficient scope given to the imagination, to enable it to create in the mind a sight of the persons, characters and circumstances of the subject: for without these the judgment will feel little or no excitement to office, and its determinations will be cold, sluggish, and imperfect. But if either or both of the two former are raised too high, or heated too much, the judgment will be jostled from its seat, and the whole matter, however important in itself, will diminish into a pantomime of the mind, in which we create images that promote no other purpose than amusement.

The abbe's writings bear evident marks of that extension and rapidness of thinking and quickness of sensation, which of all others require revisal, and the more particularly so, when applied to the living characters of nations or individuals in a state of war. The least misinformation or misconception leads to some wrong conclusion, and an error believed, becomes the progenitor of others. And as the abbe has suffered some inconveniences in France by mistaking certain circumstances of the war, and the characters of the parties therein, it becomes some apology for him that those errors were precipitated into the world by the avarice of an ungenerous enemy.

LETTER TO ABBE RAYNAL.

To an author of such distinguished reputation as the abbe Raynal, it might very well become me to apologize for the present undertaking; but, as *to be right* is the first wish of philosophy, and the first principle of history, he will, I presume, accept from me a declaration of my motives, which are those of doing justice, in preference to any complimental apology, I might otherwise make. The abbe, in the course of his work, has, in some instances, extolled without a reason, and wounded without a cause. He has given fame where it was not deserved, and withheld it where it was justly due; and appears to be so frequently in and out of temper with his subjects and parties, that few or none of them are decisively and uniformly marked.

It is yet too soon to write the history of the revolution, and whoever attempts it precipitately, will unavoidably mistake characters and circumstances, and involve himself in error and difficulty. Things, like men, are seldom understood rightly at first sight. But the abbe is wrong even in the foundation of his work; that is, he has misconceived and mis-stated the causes which produced the rupture between England and her then colonies, and which led on, step by step, unstudied and uncontrived on the part of America, to a revolution, which has engaged the attention, and affected the interest of Europe.

To prove this, I shall bring forward a passage, which, though placed towards the latter part of the abbe's work,

is more intimately connected with the beginning; and in which, speaking of the original cause of the dispute, he declares himself in the following manner—

"None," says he, "of those energetic causes, which have produced so many revolutions upon the globe, existed in North-America. Neither religion nor laws had there been outraged. The blood of martyrs or patriots had not there streamed from scaffolds. Morals had not there been insulted. Manners, customs, habits, no object dear to nations, had there been the sport of ridicule. Arbitrary power had not there torn any inhabitant from the arms of his family and friends, to drag him to a dreary dungeon. Public order had not been there inverted. The principles of administration had not been changed there; and the maxims of government had there always remained the same. The whole question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a slight tax upon the colonies."

On this extraordinary passage, it may not be improper, in general terms, to remark, that none can feel like those who suffer; and that for a man to be a competent judge of the provocatives, or as the abbe styles them, the energetic causes of the revolution, he must have resided at the time in America.

The abbe, in saying that the several particulars he has enumerated, did not exist in America, and neglecting to point out the particular period, in which he means they did not exist, reduces thereby his declaration to a nullity, by taking away all meaning from the passage.

They did not exist in 1763, and they all existed before 1776; consequently as there was a time when they did *not*, and another, when they *did* exist, the *time when* constitutes the essence of the fact, and not to give it, is to withhold the only evidence, which proves the declaration right or wrong, and on which it must stand or fall. But the declaration as it now appears, unaccompanied by time, has an effect in holding out to the world, that there was no real cause for the revolution, because it denies the existence of all those causes, which are supposed to be justifiable, and which the abbe styles energetic.

I confess myself exceedingly at a loss to find out the time to which the abbe alludes; because, in another part of the work, in speaking of the stamp act, which was passed in 1764, he styles it "an *usurpation* of the Americans' *most*

precious and sacred rights." Consequently he here admits the most energetic of all causes, that is, *an usurpation of their most precious and sacred rights*, to have existed in America twelve years before the declaration of independence, and ten years before the breaking out of hostilities. The time, therefore, in which the paragraph is true, must be antecedent to the stamp act, but as at that time there was no revolution nor any idea of one, it consequently applies without a meaning; and as it cannot, on the abbe's own principle, be applied to any time *after* the stamp act, it is therefore a wandering solitary paragraph, connected with nothing and at variance with every thing.

The stamp act, it is true, was repealed in two years after it was passed, but it was immediately followed by one of infinitely more mischievous magnitude; I mean the declaratory act, which asserted the right, as it was styled, of the British parliament, "*to bind America in all cases whatsoever.*"

If then the stamp act was an usurpation of the Americans' most precious and sacred rights, the declaratory act left them no rights at all; and contained the full grown seeds of the most despotic government ever exercised in the world. It placed America not only in the lowest, but in the basest state of vassalage; because it demanded an unconditional submission in every thing, or as the act expresses it, *in all cases whatsoever:* and what renders this act the more offensive, is, that it appears to have been passed as an act of mercy; truly then may it be said, that *the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.*

All the original charters from the crown of England, under the faith of which the adventurers from the old world settled in the new, were by this act displaced from their foundations; because, contrary to the nature of them, which was that of a compact, they were now made subject to repeal or alteration at the mere will of one party only.—The whole condition of America was thus put into the hands of the parliament or ministry, without leaving to her the least right in any case whatsoever.

There is no despotism to which this iniquitous law did not extend; and though it might have been convenient in the execution of it, to have consulted manners and habits, the principle of the act made all tyranny legal. It stopped no where. It went to every thing. It took in with it the whole life of a man, or if I may so express it, an

eternity of circumstances. It is the nature of law to require obedience, but this demanded servitude; and the condition of an American, under the operation of it, was not that of a subject, but a vassal. Tyranny has often been established *without* law and sometimes *against* it, but the history of mankind does not produce another instance, in which it has been established *by* law. It is an audacious outrage upon civil government, and cannot be too much exposed, in order to be sufficiently detested.

Neither could it be said after this, that the legislature of that country any longer made laws for this, but that it gave out commands; for wherein differed an act of parliament constructed on this principle, and operating in this manner, over an unrepresented people, from the orders of a military establishment.

The parliament of England, with respect to America, was not septennial but *perpetual*. It appeared to the latter a body always in being. Its election or its expiration were to her the same as if its members succeeded by inheritance, or went out by death, or lived for ever, or were appointed to it as a matter of office. Therefore, for the people of England to have any just conception of the mind of America, respecting this extraordinary act, they must suppose all election and expiration in that country to cease for ever, and the present parliament, its heirs, &c. to be perpetual; in this case, I ask, what would the most clamorous of them think, were an act to be passed, declaring the right of *such a parliament* to bind *them* in all cases whatsoever? For this word *whatsoever* would go as effectually to their *magna charta, bill of rights, trial by juries, &c.* as it went to the charters and forms of government in America.

I am persuaded, that the gentleman to whom I address these remarks, will not, after the passing this act, say, "that the *principles* of administration had not been *changed* in America, and that the maxims of government had there been *always the same*. For here is, in principle, a total overthrow of the whole; and not a subversion only, but an annihilation of the foundation of liberty, and absolute domination established in its stead.

The abbe likewise states the case exceedingly wrong and injuriously, when he says, "that *the whole* question was reduced to the knowing whether the mother country had, or had not, a right to lay, directly or indirectly, a *slight* tax upon the colonies." This was *not the whole* of

the question; neither was the *quantity* of the tax the object either to the ministry or to the Americans. It was the principle, of which the tax made but a part, and the quantity still less, that formed the ground on which America resisted.

The tax on tea, which is the tax here alluded to, was neither more nor less than an experiment to establish the practice of the declaratory law upon; modelled into the more fashionable phrase *of the universal supremacy of parliament.* For until this time the declaratory law had lain dormant, and the framers of it had contented themselves with barely declaring an opinion.

Therefore the *whole* question with America, in the opening of the dispute, was, shall we be bound in all cases whatsoever by the British parliament, or shall we not? For submission to the tea or tax act implied an acknowledgment of the declaratory act, or, in other words, of the universal supremacy of parliament, which as they never intended to do, it was necessary they should oppose it, in its first stage of execution.

It is probable the abbe has been led into this mistake by perusing detached pieces in some of the American newspapers; for, in a case where all were interested, every one had a right to give his opinion; and there were many, who, with the best intentions, did not choose the best, nor indeed the true ground, to defend their cause upon. They felt themselves right by a general impulse, without being able to separate, analyze and arrange the parts.

I am somewhat unwilling to examine too minutely into the whole of this extraordinary passage of the abbe, lest I should appear to treat it with severity; otherwise I could show that not a single declaration is justly founded: for instance, the reviving an obsolete act of the reign of Henry VIII. and fitting it to the Americans, by authority of which they were to be seized and brought from America to England, and there imprisoned and tried for any supposed offences, was, in the worst sense of the words, *to tear them, by the arbitrary power of parliament, from the arms of their families and friends, and drag them not only to dreary but distant dungeons.* Yet this act was contrived some years before the breaking out of hostilities. And again, though the blood of martyrs and patriots had not streamed on the scaffolds, it streamed in the streets, in the massacre of the

inhabitants of Boston, by the British soldiery in the year 1770.

Had the abbe said that the causes which produced the revolution in America were originally *different* from those which produced revolutions in other parts of the globe, he had been right. Here the value and quality of liberty, the nature of government and the dignity of man, were known and understood, and the attachment of the Americans to these principles, produced the revolution as a natural and almost unavoidable consequence. They had no particular family to set up or pull down. Nothing of personality was incorporated with their cause. They started even-handed with each other, and went no faster into the several stages of it, than they were driven by the unrelenting and imperious conduct of Britain. Nay, in the last act, the declaration of independence, they had nearly been too late; for had it not been declared at the exact time it was, I see no period in their affairs since, in which it could have been declared with the same effect, and probably not at all.

But the object being formed before the reverse of fortune took place, that is, before the operations of the gloomy campaign of 1776, their honor, their interest, their every thing, called loudly on them to maintain it; and that glow of thought and energy of heart, which even a distant prospect of independence inspires, gave confidence to their hopes and resolution to their conduct, which a state of dependance could never have reached. They looked forward to happier days and scenes of rest, and qualified the hardships of the campaign by contemplating the establishment of their new born system.

If on the other hand we take a review of what part Britain has acted, we shall find every thing which ought to make a nation blush. The most vulgar abuse, accompanied by that species of haughtiness, which distinguishes the hero of a mob from the character of a gentleman; it was equally as much from her manners as from her injustice that she lost the colonies. By the latter she provoked their principles, by the former she wore out their temper; and it ought to be held out as an example to the world, to show, how necessary it is to conduct the business of government with civility. In short, other revolutions may have originated in caprice or generated in ambition; but here,

the most unoffending humility was tortured into rage, and the infancy of existence made to weep.

A union so extensive, continued and determined, suffering with patience and never in despair, could not have been produced by common causes. It must be something capable of reaching the whole soul of man and arming it with perpetual energy. It is in vain to look for precedents among the revolutions of former ages, to find out, by comparison, the causes of this. The spring, the progress, the object, the consequences, nay, the men, their habits of thinking, and all the circumstances of the country are different. Those of other nations are, in general, little more than the history of their quarrels. They are marked by no important character in the annals of events; mixed in the mass of general matters, they occupy but a common page; and while the chief of the successful partisans stepped into power, the plundered multitude sat down and sorrowed. Few, very few of them are accompanied with reformation, either in government or manners; many of them with the most consummate profligacy. Triumph on the one side and misery on the other were the only events. Pains, punishments, torture, and death were made the business of mankind, until compassion, the fairest associate of the heart, was driven from its place, and the eye, accustomed to continual cruelty, could behold it without offence.

But as the principles of the present revolution differed from those which preceded it, so likewise did the conduct of America both in government and war. Neither the foul finger of disgrace nor the bloody hand of vengeance has hitherto put a blot upon her fame. Her victories have received lustre from a greatness of lenity; and her laws have been permitted to slumber, where they might justly be awakened to punish. War, so much the trade of the world has here been only the business of necessity; and when the necessity shall cease, her very enemies must confess, that as she drew the sword in her just defence, she used it without cruelty and sheathed it without revenge.

As it is not my design to extend these remarks to a history, I shall now take my leave of this passage of the abbe, with an observation, which until something unfolds itself to convince me otherwise, I cannot avoid believing to be true;—which is, that it was the fixed determination of the British cabinet to quarrel with America at all events,

They (the members who composed the cabinet) had no doubt of success, if they could once bring it to the issue of a battle, and they expected from a conquest, what they could neither propose with decency, nor hope for by negotiation. The charters and constitutions of the colonies were become to them matters of offence, and their rapid progress in property and population were disgustingly beheld as the growing and natural means of independence. They saw no way to retain them long but by reducing them in time. A conquest would at once have made them both lords and landlords; and put them in the possession both of the revenue and the rental. The whole trouble of government would have ceased in a victory, and a final end be put to remonstrance and debate. The experience of the stamp act, had taught them how to quarrel with the advantages of cover and convenience, and they had nothing to do but to renew the scene, and put contention into motion. They hoped for a rebellion, and they made one. They expected a declaration of independence and they were not disappointed. But after this, they looked for victory, and they obtained a defeat.

If this be taken as the generating cause of the contest, then is every part of the conduct of the British ministry consistent from the commencement of the dispute, until the signing the treaty of Paris, after which, conquest becoming doubtful, they retreated to negotiation, and were again defeated.

Though the abbe possesses and displays great powers of genius, and is a master of style and language, he seems not to pay equal attention to the office of an historian. His facts are coldly and carelessly stated. They neither inform the reader nor interest him. Many of them are erroneous, and most of them are defective and obscure. It is undoubtedly both an ornament and a useful addition to history, to accompany it with maxims and reflections. They afford likewise an agreeable change to the style and a more diversified manner of expression; but it is absolutely necessary that the root from whence they spring, or the foundation on which they are raised, should be well attended to, which in this work are not. The abbe hastens through his narrations as if he was glad to get from them, that he may enter the more copious field of eloquence and imagination.

The actions of Trenton and Princeton, in New-Jersey in December 1776, and January following, on which the fate of America stood for a while trembling on the point of suspense, and from which the most important consequences followed, are comprised within a single paragraph, faintly conceived, and barren of character, circumstance and description.

"On the 25th of December," says the abbe, "they (the Americans) crossed the Delaware, and fell *accidentally* upon Trenton, which was occupied by fifteen hundred of the twelve thousand Hessians, sold in so base a manner by their avaricious master, to the king of Great-Britain. This corps was *massacred*, taken, or dispersed. Eight days after, three English regiments were, in like manner, driven from Princeton, but after having better supported their reputation than the foreign troops in their pay."

This is all the account which is given of these interesting events. The abbe has preceded them by two or three pages on the military operations of both armies, from the time of general Howe's arriving before New-York from Halifax, and the vast reinforcements of British and foreign troops with lord Howe from England. But in these, there is so much mistake, and so many omissions, that, to set them right, must be the business of a history and not of a letter. The action of Long-Island is but barely hinted at, and the operations at the White-plains wholly omitted: as are likewise the attack and loss of fort Washington with a garrison of about two thousand five hundred men, and the precipitate evacuation of fort Lee, in consequence thereof: which losses were in a great measure the cause of the retreat through the Jerseys to the Delaware, a distance of about ninety miles. Neither is the manner of the retreat described; which, from the season of the year, the nature of the country, the nearness of the two armies (sometimes within sight and shot of each other, for such a length of way) the rear of the one employed in pulling down bridges, and the van of the other in building them up, must necessarily be accompanied with many interesting circumstances.

It was a period of distresses. A crisis rather of danger than of hope. There is no description can do it justice; and even the actors in it, looking back upon the scene, are surprised how they got through; and at a loss to account for those powers of the mind and springs of animation, by which they withstood the force of accumulated misfortune.

It was expected, that the time for which the army was enlisted, would carry the campaign so far into the winter, that the severity of the season, and the consequent condition of the roads, would prevent any material operation of the enemy, until the new army could be raised for the next year. And I mention it, as a matter worthy of attention, by all future historians, that the movements of the American army, until the attack upon the Hessian post at Trenton, the 26th of December, are to be considered as operating to effect no other principal purpose than delay, and to wear away the campaign under all the disadvantages of an unequal force, with as little misfortune as possible.

But the loss of the garrison at fort Washington on the 16th of November, and the expiration of the time of a considerable part of the army, so early as the 30th of the same month, and which were to be followed by almost daily expirations afterwards, made retreat the only final expedient. To these circumstances may be added the forlorn and destitute condition of the few that remained; for the garrison of fort Lee, which composed almost the whole of the retreat, had been obliged to abandon it so instantaneously, that every article of stores and baggage was left behind, and in this destitute condition, without tent or blanket, and without any other utensils to dress their provision than what they procured by the way, they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the address and management to prolong it to the space of nineteen days.

By this unexpected or rather unthought-of turn of affairs, the country was in an instant surprised into confusion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without an army to oppose him. There were no succors to be had, but from the free-will offering of the inhabitants. All was choice and every man reasoned for himself.

It was in this situation of affairs, equally calculated to confound or to inspire, that the gentleman, the merchant, the farmer, the tradesman and the laborer mutually turned from all the conveniences of home, to perform the duties of private soldiers, and undergo the severities of a winter campaign. The delay so judiciously contrived on the retreat, afforded time for the volunteer reinforcements to join general Washington on the Delaware.

The abbe is likewise wrong in saying, that the American army fell *accidentally* on Trenton. It was the very object for which general Washington crossed the Delaware in the

dead of the night and in the midst of snow, storms, and ice; and which he immediately re-crossed with his prisoners, as soon as he had accomplished his purpose. Neither was the intended enterprise a secret to the enemy, information having been sent of it by letter, from a British officer at Princeton, to colonel Rolle, who commanded the Hessians at Trenton, which letter was afterwards found by the Americans. Nevertheless the post was completely surprised. A small circumstance, which had the appearance of mistake on the part of the Americans, led to a more capital and real mistake on the part of Rolle.

The case was this. A detachment of twenty or thirty Americans had been sent across the river, from a post a few miles above, by an officer unacquainted with the intended attack; these were met by a body of Hessians, on the night to which the information pointed, which was Christmas night, and repulsed. Nothing further appearing, and the Hessians mistaking this for the advanced party, supposed the enterprise disconcerted, which at that time was not begun, and under this idea returned to their quarters; so that, what might have raised an alarm, and brought the Americans into an ambuscade, served to take off the force of an information, and promote the success of the enterprise. Soon after daylight, general Washington entered the town, and after a little opposition, made himself master of it, with upwards of nine hundred prisoners.

This combination of equivocal circumstances, falling within what the abbe styles, "*the wide empire of chance*," would have afforded a fine field for thought, and I wish for the sake of that elegance of reflection he is so capable of using, that he had known it.

But the action at Princeton was accompanied by a still greater embarrassment of matters, and followed by more extraordinary consequences. The Americans, by a happy stroke of generalship, in this instance, not only deranged and defeated all the plans of the British, in the intended moment of execution, but drew from their posts the enemy they were not able to drive, and obliged them to close the campaign. As the circumstance is a curiosity in war, and not well understood in Europe, I shall, as concisely as I can, relate the principal parts; they may serve to prevent future historians from error, and recover from forgetfulness a scene of magnificent fortitude.

Immediately after the surprise of the Hessians at Trenton, general Washington re-crossed the Delaware, which at this place is about three quarters of a mile over, and reassumed his former post on the Pennsylvania side. Trenton remained unoccupied, and the enemy were posted at Princeton, twelve miles distant, on the road towards New-York. The weather was now growing very severe, and as there were very few houses near the shore where general Washington had taken his station, the greatest part of his army remained out in the woods and fields. These, with some other circumstances, induced the re-crossing the Delaware and taking possession of Trenton. It was undoubtedly a bold adventure, and carried with it the appearance of defiance, especially when we consider the panic-struck condition of the enemy on the loss of the Hessian post. But in order to give a just idea of the affair, it is necessary that I should describe the place.

Trenton is situated on a rising ground, about three quarters of a mile distant from the Delaware, on the eastern or Jersey side; and is cut into two divisions by a small creek or rivulet, sufficient to turn a mill which is on it, after which it empties itself at nearly right angles into the Delaware. The upper division, which is that to the northeast, contains about seventy or eighty houses, and the lower about forty or fifty. The ground on each side this creek, and on which the houses are, is likewise rising, and the two divisions present an agreeable prospect to each other, with the creek between, on which there is a small stone bridge of one arch.

Scarcely had general Washington taken post here, and before the several parties of militia, out on detachments, or on their way, could be collected, than the British, leaving behind them a strong garrison at Princeton, marched suddenly and entered Trenton at the upper or northeast quarter. A party of the Americans skirmished with the advanced party of the British, to afford time for removing the stores and baggage, and withdrawing over the bridge.

In a little time the British had possession of one half of the town, general Washington of the other; and the creek only separated the two armies. Nothing could be a more critical situation than this, and if ever the fate of America depended upon the event of a day, it was now. The Delaware was filling fast with large sheets of driving ice, and was impassable; of course no retreat into Pennsylvania

could be effected, neither is it possible, in the face of an enemy, to pass a river of such extent. The roads were broken and rugged with the frost, and the main road was occupied by the enemy.

About four o'clock a party of the British approached the bridge, with a design to gain it, but were repulsed. They made no more attempts, though the creek itself is passable any where between the bridge and the Delaware. It runs in a rugged, natural made ditch, over which a person may pass with little difficulty, the stream being rapid and shallow. Evening was now coming on, and the British, believing they had all the advantages they could wish for, and that they could use them when they pleased, discontinued all further operations, and held themselves prepared to make the attack next morning.

But the next morning produced a scene as elegant as it was unexpected. The British were under arms and ready to march to action, when one of their light-horse from Princeton came furiously down the street, with an account that general Washington had that morning attacked and carried the British post at that place, and was proceeding on to seize the magazine at Brunswick; on which the British, who were then on the point of making an assault on the evacuated camp of the Americans, wheeled about and in a fit of consternation marched for Princeton.

This retreat is one of those extraordinary circumstances, that in future ages may probably pass for fable. For it will with difficulty be believed, that two armies, on which such important consequences depended, should be crowded into so small a space as Trenton; and that the one, on the eve of an engagement, when every ear is supposed to be open, and every degree of watchfulness employed, should move completely from the ground, with all its stores, baggage and artillery, unknown and even unsuspected by the other. And so entirely were the British deceived, that when they heard the report of the cannon and small arms at Princeton, they supposed it to be thunder, though in the depth of winter.

General Washington, the better to cover and disguise his retreat from Trenton, had ordered a line of fires to be lighted up in front of his camp. These not only served to give an appearance of going to rest, and continuing that deception, but they effectually concealed from the British whatever was acting behind them, for flame can no more

be seen through than a wall, and in this situation, it may with propriety be said, they became a pillar of fire to one army, and a pillar of a cloud to the other. After this, by a circuitous march of about eighteen miles, the Americans reached Princeton early in the morning.

The number of prisoners taken were between two and three hundred, with which general Washington immediately set off. The van of the British army from Trenton entered Princeton about an hour after the Americans had left it, who continuing their march for the remainder of the day, arrived in the evening at a convenient situation, wide of the main road to Brunswick, and about sixteen miles distant from Princeton. But so wearied and exhausted were they, with the continual and unabated service and fatigue of two days and a night, from action to action, without shelter and almost without refreshment, that the bare and frozen ground, with no other covering than the sky, became to them a place of comfortable rest. By these two events, and with but a little comparative force to accomplish them, the Americans closed with advantage, a campaign, which, but a few days before, threatened the country with destruction. The British army, apprehensive for the safety of their magazines at Brunswick, eighteen miles distant, marched immediately for that place, where they arrived late in the evening, and from which they made no attempts to move, for nearly five months.

Having thus stated the principal outlines of these two most interesting actions, I shall now quit them, to put the abbe right in his mis-stated account of the debt and paper money of America, wherein, speaking of these matters, he says:

"These ideal riches were rejected. The more the multiplication of them was urged by want, the greater did their depreciation grow. The congress was indignant at the affront given to its money, and declared all those to be traitors to their country, who should not receive it as they would have received gold itself.

"Did not this body know, that prepossessions are no more to be controlled than feelings are? Did it not perceive that, in the present crisis, every rational man would be afraid of exposing his fortune? Did it not see, that at the beginning of a republic, it permitted to itself the exercise of such acts of despotism as are unknown even in

the countries which are moulded to, and become familiar with, servitude and oppression? Could it pretend that it did not punish a want of confidence with the pains which would have been scarcely merited by revolt and treason? Of all this was the congress well aware. But it had no choice of means. Its despised and despicable scraps of paper were actually thirty times below their original value, when more of them were ordered to be made. On the 13th of September, 1779, there was of this paper among the public, to the amount of 35,544,155*l.* The state owed moreover 8,385,356*l.* without reckoning the particular debts of single provinces."

In the above recited passages, the abbe speaks as if the United States had contracted a debt of upwards of forty million pounds sterling, besides the debts of the individual states. After which, speaking of foreign trade with America, he says, that "those countries in Europe, which are truly commercial ones, knowing that North-America had been reduced to contract debts, at the epoch even of her greatest prosperity, wisely thought that, in her present distress, she would be able to pay but very little, for what might be carried to her."

I know it must be extremely difficult to make foreigners understand the nature and circumstances of our paper money, because there are natives, who do not understand it themselves. But with us its fate is now determined. Common consent has consigned it to rest with that kind of regard, which the long service of inanimate things insensibly obtains from mankind. Every stone in the bridge, that has carried us over, seems to have a claim upon our esteem. But this was a corner stone, and its usefulness cannot be forgotten. There is something in a grateful mind, which extends itself even to things that can neither be benefited by regard, nor suffer by neglect: but so it is; and almost every man is sensible of the effect.

But to return. The paper money, though issued from congress under the name of dollars, did not come from that body always at that value. Those which were issued the first year, were equal to gold and silver. The second year less, the third still less, and so on, for nearly the space of five years: at the end of which, I imagine, that the whole value, at which congress might pay away the several emissions, taking them together, was about ten or twelve million pounds sterling.

Now as it would have taken ten or twelve millions sterling of taxes to carry on the war for five years, and, as while this money was issuing and likewise depreciating down to nothing, there were none, or few valuable taxes paid; consequently the event to the public was the same, whether they sunk ten or twelve millions of expended money, by depreciation, or paid ten or twelve millions by taxation; for as they did not do both, and chose to do one, the matter which, in a general view, was indifferent. And therefore, what the abbe supposes to be a debt, has now no existence; it having been paid, by every body consenting to reduce, at his own expense, from the value of the bills continually passing among themselves, a sum, equal, nearly, to what the expense of the war was for five years.

Again. The paper money having now ceased, and the depreciation with it, and gold and silver supplied its place, the war will now be carried on by taxation, which will draw from the public a considerable less sum than what the depreciation drew; but as while they pay the former, they do not suffer the latter, and as when they suffered the latter, they did not pay the former, the thing will be nearly equal, with this moral advantage, that taxation occasions frugality and thought, and depreciation produced dissipation and carelessness.

And again. If a man's portion of taxes comes to less than what he lost by the depreciation, it proves that the alteration is in his favor. If it comes to more, and he is justly assessed, it shows that he did not sustain his proper share of depreciation, because the one was as operatively his tax as the other.

It is true, that it never was intended, neither was it foreseen, that the debt contained in the paper currency should sink itself in this manner; but as by the voluntary conduct of all and of every one it has arrived at this fate, the debt is paid by those who owed it. Perhaps nothing was ever so universally the act of a country as this. Government had no hand in it. Every man depreciated his own money by his own consent, for such was the effect, which the raising the nominal value of goods produced. But as by such reduction he sustained a loss equal to what he must have paid to sink it by taxation, therefore the line of justice is to consider his loss by the depreciation as his tax for that time, and not to tax him when the war is over,

to make that money good in any other person's hands, which became nothing in his own.

Again. The paper currency was issued for the express purpose of carrying on the war. It has performed that service, without any other material charge to the public, while it lasted. But to suppose, as some did, that, at the end of the war, it was to grow into gold or silver, or become equal thereto, was to suppose that we were to *get* two hundred millions of dollars by *going to war*, instead of *paying* the cost of carrying it on.

But if any thing in the situation of America, as to her currency or her circumstances, yet remains not understood, then let it be remembered, that this war is the public's war; the country's war. It is *their* independence that is to be supported; *their* property that is to be secured; *their* country that is to be saved. Here, government, the army, and the people, are mutually and reciprocally one. In other wars, kings may lose their thrones, and their dominions; but here, the loss must fall on the majesty of the multitude, and the property they are contending to save. Every man being sensible of this, he goes to the field, or pays his portion of the charge, as the sovereign of his own possessions; and when he is conquered a monarch falls.

The remark, which the abbe in the conclusion of the passage has made, respecting America's contracting debts in the time of her prosperity (by which he means, before the breaking out of hostilities,) serves to show, though he has not made the application, the very great commercial difference between a dependant and an independent country. In a state of dependance, and with a fettered commerce, though with all the advantages of peace, her trade could not balance itself, and she annually run into debt. But now, in a state of independence, though involved in war, she requires no credit; her stores are full of merchandize, and gold and silver are become the currency of the country. How these things have established themselves is difficult to account for: but they are facts, and facts are more powerful than arguments.

As it is probable this letter will undergo a republication in Europe, the remarks here thrown together will serve to show the extreme folly of Britain in resting her hopes of success on the extinction of our paper currency. The expectation is at once so childish and forlorn, that it places

her in the laughable condition of a famished lion watching for prey at a spider's web.

From this account of the currency, the abbe proceeds to state the condition of America in the winter of 1777, and the spring following; and closes his observations with mentioning the treaty of alliance, which was signed in France, and the propositions of the British ministry, which were rejected in America. But in the manner in which the abbe has arranged his facts, there is a very material error, that not only he, but other European historians have fallen into; none of them having assigned the true cause why the British proposals were rejected, and all of them have assigned a wrong one.

In the winter of 1778, and spring following, congress were assembled at Yorktown, in Pennsylvania, the British were in possession of Philadelphia, and general Washington with the army were encamped in huts at the Valley-Forge, twenty-five miles distant therefrom. To all, who can remember, it was a season of hardship, but not despair; and the abbe, speaking of this period and its inconveniences, says:

"A multitude of privations, added to so many other misfortunes, might make the Americans regret their former tranquillity, and incline them to an accommodation with England. In vain had the people been bound to the new government by the sacredness of oaths and the influence of religion. In vain had endeavors been used to convince them that it was impossible to treat safely with a country, in which one parliament might overturn, what should have been established by another. In vain had they been threatened with the eternal resentment of an exasperated and vindictive enemy. It was possible that these distant troubles might not be balanced by the weight of present evils.

"So thought the British ministry, when they sent to the new world public agents, authorised to offer every thing except independence to these very Americans, from whom they had two years before exacted an unconditional submission. It is not improbable but, that by this plan of conciliation, a few months sooner, some effect might have been produced. But at the period, at which it was proposed by the court of London, it was rejected with disdain, because this measure appeared but as an argument of fear and weakness. The people were already re-assured. The

congress, the generals, the troops, the bold and skilful men, in each colony had possessed themselves of the authority; every thing had recovered its first spirit. *This was the effect of a treaty of friendship and commerce between the United States and the court of Versailles, signed the 6th of February*, 1778."

On this passage of the abbe's I cannot help remarking, that, to unite time with circumstance, is a material nicety in history; the want of which frequently throws it into endless confusion and mistake, occasions a total separation between causes and consequences, and connects them with others they are not immediately, and sometimes not at all, related to.

The abbe, in saying that the offers of the British ministry "were rejected with disdain," is *right*, as to the *fact*, but *wrong* as to the *time;* and this error in the time, has occasioned him to be mistaken in the cause.

The signing the treaty of Paris the 6th of February, 1778, could have no effect on the mind or politics of America, until it was *known in America:* and therefore, when the abbe says, that the rejection of the British offers was in consequence of the alliance, he must mean, that it was in consequence of the alliance, *being known* in America; which was not the case: and by this mistake he not only takes from her the reputation, which her unshaken fortitude in that trying situation deserves, but is likewise led very injuriously to suppose, that had she *not known* of the treaty, the offers would probably have been accepted; whereas she knew nothing of the treaty at the time of the rejection, and consequently did not reject them on that ground.

The propositions or offers above mentioned, were contained in two bills brought into the British parliament by lord North on the 17th of February, 1778. Those bills were hurried through both houses with unusual haste, and before they had gone through all the customary forms of parliament, copies of them were sent over to lord Howe and general Howe, then in Philadelphia, who were likewise commissioners. General Howe ordered them to be printed in Philadelphia, and sent copies of them by a flag to general Washington, to be forwarded to congress at Yorktown, where they arrived the 21st of April, 1778.—Thus much for the arrival of the bills in America.

Congress, as is their usual mode, appointed a committee from their own body, to examine them and report thereon.

The report was brought in the next day (the twenty-second,) was read, and unanimously agreed to, entered on their journals, and published for the information of the country. Now this report must be the rejection to which the abbe alludes, because congress gave no other formal opinion on those bills and propositions: and on a subsequent application from the British commissioners, dated the 27th of May, and received at Yorktown the 6th of June, congress immediately referred them for an answer, to their printed resolves of the 22d of April. Thus much for the rejection of the offers.

On the 2d of May, that is, eleven days after the above rejection was made, the treaty between the United States and France arrived at Yorktown; and until this moment congress had not the least notice or idea, that such a measure was in any train of execution. But lest this declaration of mine should pass only for assertion, I shall support it by proof, for it is material to the character and principle of the revolution to show, that no condition of America, since the declaration of independence, however trying and severe, ever operated to produce the most distant idea of yielding it up either by force, distress, artifice or persuasion. And this proof is the more necessary, because it was the system of the British ministry at this time, as well as before and since, to hold out to the European powers that America was unfixed in her resolutions and policy; hoping by this artifice to lessen her reputation in Europe, and weaken the confidence which those powers or any of them might be inclined to place in her.

At the time these matters were transacting, I was secretary in the foreign department of congress. All the *political* letters from the American commissioners rested in my hands, and all that were officially written went from my office; and so far from congress knowing any thing of the signing the treaty, at the time they rejected the British offers, they had not received a line of information from their commissioners at Paris, on any subject whatever for upwards of a twelve-month. Probably the loss of the port of Philadelphia and the navigation of the Delaware, together with the danger of the seas, covered at this time with British cruisers, contributed to the disappointment.

One packet, it is true, arrived at Yorktown in January preceding, which was about three months before the arrival of the treaty; but, strange as it may appear, every

letter had been taken out, before it was put on board the vessel which brought it from France, and blank white paper put in their stead.

Having thus stated the time when the proposals from the British commissioners were first received, and likewise the time when the treaty of alliance arrived, and shown that the rejection of the former was eleven days prior to the arrival of the latter, and without the least knowledge of such circumstance having taken place or being about to take place; the rejection, therefore, must, and ought to be attributed to the fixed, unvaried sentiments of America respecting the enemy she is at war with, and her determination to support her independence to the last public effort, and not to any new circumstance which had taken place in her favor, which at that time she did not and could not know of.

Besides, there is a vigor of determination and spirit of defiance in the language of the rejection (which I here subjoin,) which derive their greatest glory by appearing before the treaty was known; for that, which is bravery in distress becomes insult in prosperity: and the treaty placed America on such a strong foundation, that had she then known it, the answer which she gave, would have appeared rather as an air of triumph, than as the glowing serenity of fortitude.

Upon the whole, the abbe appears to have entirely mistaken the matter; for instead of attributing the rejection of the propositions to *our knowledge* of the treaty of alliance; he should have attributed the origin of them in the British cabinet, to *their knowledge* of that event. And then the reason why they were hurried over to America in the state of bills, that is, before they were passed into acts, is easily accounted for, which is, that they might have the chance of reaching America before any knowledge of the treaty should arrive, which they were lucky enough to do, and there met the fate they so richly merited. That these bills were brought into the British parliament after the treaty with France was signed, is proved from the dates: the treaty being on the 6th, and the bills on the 17th of February. And that the signing the treaty was known in parliament, when the bills were brought in, is likewise proved by a speech of Mr. Fox, on the said 17th of February, who, in reply to lord North informed

the house of the treaty being signed, and challenged the minister's knowledge of the same fact.*

Though I am not surprised to see the abbe mistaken in matters of history, acted at such a distance from his sphere of immediate observation, yet I am more than surprised to find him wrong (or at least what appears so to me) in the

* In Congress, April 22d, 1788.

"The committee to whom was referred the general's letter of the 18th, containing a certain printed paper sent from Philadelphia, purporting to be the draught of a bill for declaring the *intentions* of the parliament of Great Britain, as to the exercise of what they are pleased to term their *right* of imposing taxes within these United States: and also the draught of a bill to enable the king of Great Britain to appoint commissioners, with powers to treat, consult, and agree upon the means of quieting certain disorders within the said states, beg leave to observe,

"That the said paper being industriously circulated by emissaries of the enemy, in a partial and secret manner, the same ought to be forthwith printed for the public information.

"The committee cannot ascertain whether the contents of the said paper have been framed in Philadelphia, or in Great Britain, much less whether the same are really and truly intended to be brought into the parliament of that kingdom, or whether the said parliament will confer thereon the usual solemnities of their laws. But are inclined to believe this will happen, for the following reasons:

"1st, Because their general hath made divers feeble efforts to set on foot some kind of treaty during the last winter, though, either from a mistaken idea of his own dignity and importance, the want of information, or some other cause, he hath not made application to those who are invested with a proper authority.

"2d, Because they suppose that the fallacious idea of a cessation of hostilities will render these states remiss in their preparations for war.

"3d, Because believing the Americans wearied with war, they suppose we will accede to their terms for the sake of peace.

"4th, Because they suppose our negotiations may be subject to a like corrupt influence with their debates.

"5th, Because they expect from this step the same effects they did from what one of their ministers thought proper to call his *conciliatory motion, viz.* that it will prevent foreign powers from giving aid to these states; that it will lead their own subjects to continue a little longer the present war: and that it will detach some weak men in America, from the cause of freedom and virtue.

"6th, Because their king, from his own showing, hath reason to apprehend that his fleets and armies, instead of being employed against the territories of these states, will be necessary for the defence of his own dominions. And,

"7th. Because the impracticability of subjugating this country being every day more and more manifest, it is their interest to extricate themselves from the war upon any terms.

"The committee beg leave further to observe, that upon a supposition the matters contained in the said paper will really go into the British statute books, they serve to show, in a clear point of view, the weakness and wickedness of the enemy.

"*Their weakness.*

"1st, Because they formerly declared, not only that they had a right to bind the inhabitants of these states in all cases whatsoever, but also that the said inhabitants should *absolutely* and *unconditionally* submit to the exercise of that right. And this submission they have endeavored to exact by the sword. Receding from this claim, therefore, under the present circumstances shows their inability to enforce it.

well enlightened field of philosophical reflection. Here the materials are his own; created by himself; and the error therefore, is an act of the mind.

Hitherto my remarks have been confined to circumstances; the order in which they arose, and the events

"2d, Because their prince hath heretofore rejected the humblest petitions of the representatives of America, praying to be considered as subjects, and protected in the enjoyment of peace, liberty and safety: and hath waged a most cruel war against them, and employed the savages to butcher innocent women and children. But now the same prince pretends to treat with those very representatives, and grant to the *arms* of America what he refused to her *prayers*.

"3d, Because they have uniformly labored to conquer this continent, rejecting every idea of accommodation proposed to them, from a confidence in their own strength. Wherefore it is evident, from the change in their mode of attack, that they have lost this confidence. And,

"4th. Because the constant language, spoken, not only by their ministers, but by the most public and authentic acts of the nation, hath been, that it is incompatible with their dignity to treat with the Americans while they have arms in their hands. Notwithstanding which, an offer is now about to be made for treaty.

"*The wickedness and insincerity* of the enemy appear from the following considerations:

"1st, Either the *bills* now to be passed contain a direct or indirect cession of a part of their former claims, or they do not. If they do, then it is acknowleged that they have sacrificed many brave men in an unjust quarrel. If they do not, then they are calculated to deceive America into terms, to which neither argument before the war, nor force since, could procure her assent.

"2d, The first of these *bills* appears, from the title, to be a declaration of the *intentions* of the British parliament concerning the exercise of the *right of imposing taxes* within these states. Wherefore, should these states treat under the said bill, they would *indirectly* acknowledge that right, to obtain which acknowledgment the present war hath been wickedly undertaken and prosecuted on the part of Great Britain.

"3d, Should such pretended right be so acquiesced in, then, of consequence the same might be exercised whenever the British parliament should find themselves in a different *temper* and *disposition*; since it must depend upon [illegible] and such like contingencies, how far men will act according to their former *intentions*.

"4th, The said first bill, in the body thereof, containeth no new matter, but is precisely the same with the motion before-mentioned, and liable to all the objections which lay against the said motion, excepting the following particular, *viz.* that *by the motion* actual taxation was to be suspended, so long as America should give as much as the said parliament might think proper: whereas, *by the proposed bill*, it is to be suspended, as long as future parliaments continue of the same mind with the present.

"5th, From the second bill it appears, that the British king may, if he pleases, appoint commissioners to *treat* and *agree* with those, whom they please, about a variety of things therein mentioned. But such treaties and agreements are to be of no validity without the concurrence of the said parliament, except so far as they relate to the *suspension* of hostilities, and of certain of their acts, the granting of pardons, and the appointing of governors to these sovereign, free and independent states. Wherefore, the said parliament have reserved to themselves, in *express words*, the power of setting aside any such treaty, and taking the advantage of any circumstances which may arise to subject this continent to their usurpations.

"6th, The said bill, by holding out the tender of pardon, implies a criminality in our justifiable resistance, and consequently, to treat under it would

they produced. In these, my information being better than the abbe's, my task was easy. How I may succeed in controverting matters of sentiment and opinion, with one whom years, experience, and long established reputation have placed in a superior line, I am less confident in;

be an implied acknowledgment, that the inhabitants of these states were what Britain has declared them to be, *Rebels*.

"7th, The inhabitants of these states being claimed by them as subjects, they may infer, from the nature of the negotiation now pretended to be set on foot, that the said inhabitants would of right be afterwards bound by such laws as they should make. Wherefore, any agreement entered into on such negotiation might at any future time be repealed. And,

"8th. Because the said bill purports, that the commissioners therein mentioned may treat with private individuals: a measure highly derogatory to the dignity of national character.

"From all which it appears evident to your committee, that the said bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of these states, so as to create divisions among them, and a defection from the common cause, now by the blessing of divine providence drawing near to a favorable issue. That they are the sequel of that insidious plan, which from the days of the stamp act down to the present time, hath involved this country in contention and bloodshed. And that, as in other cases so in this, although circumstances may force them at times to recede from their unjustifiable claims, there can be no doubt but they will as heretofore, upon the first favorable occasion, again display that lust of domination, which hath rent in twain this mighty empire of Britain.

"Upon the whole matter, the committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that as the Americans united in this arduous contest upon principles of common interest, for the defence of common rights and privileges, which union hath been cemented by common calamities and by mutual good offices and affection, so the great cause for which they contend, and in which all mankind are interested, must derive its success from the continuance of that union. Wherefore, any man, or body of men, who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with commissioners under the crown of Great Britain, or any of them, ought to be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies of the United States.

"And further your committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that these United States cannot with propriety, hold any conference or treaty with *any* commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else, in positive and express terms, acknowledge the independence of the said states.

"And inasmuch as it appears to be the intention of the enemies of these states to lull them into a fatal security—to the end that they may act with becoming weight and importance, it is the opinion of your committee, that the several states be called upon to use the most strenuous exertions to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the said states be held in readiness, to act as occasion may require."

The following is the answer of congress to the second application of the commissioners:

"*York-Town, June* 6, 1778.

"SIR,

"I have had the honor of laying your letter of the 3d instant, with the acts of the British parliament which came inclosed, before congress: and I am instructed to acquaint you, sir, that they have already expressed their sentiments upon bills, not essentially different from those acts, in a publication of the 22d of April last.

but as they fall within the scope of my observations it would be improper to pass them over.

From this part of the abbe's work to the latter end, I find several expressions, which appear to me to start, with a cynical complexion, from the path of liberal thinking, or at least they are so involved as to lose many of the beauties which distinguish other parts of the performance.

The abbe having brought his work to the period when the treaty of alliance between France and the United State commenced, proceeds to make some remarks thereon.

"In short," says he, "philosophy, whose first sentiment is the desire to see all governments just and all people happy, in casting her eyes upon this alliance of a monarchy, with a people who are defending their liberty, *is curious to know the motive. She sees at once, too clearly, that the happiness of mankind has no part in it.*"

Whatever train of thinking or of temper the abbe might be in, when he penned this expression, matters not. They will neither qualify the sentiment, nor add to its defect. If right, it needs no apology; if wrong, it merits no excuse. It is sent into the world as an opinion of philosophy, and may be examined without regard to the author.

It seems to be a defect, connected with ingenuity, that it often employs itself more in matters of curiosity, than usefulness. Man must be the privy counsellor of fate, or something is not right. He must know the springs, the whys and wherefores of every thing, or he sits down unsatisfied. Whether this be a crime, or only a caprice of humanity, I am not inquiring into. I shall take the passage as I find it, and place my objections against it.

It is not so properly the *motives* which *produced* the alliance, as the *consequences* which are to be *produced from it*, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection. In the

"Be assured, sir, when the king of Great Britain shall be seriously disposed to put an end to the unprovoked and cruel war waged against these United States, congress will readily attend to such terms of peace, as may consist with the honor of independent nations, the interest of their constituents, and the sacred regard they mean to pay to treaties. I have the honor to be, sir,

Your most obedient, and
most humble servant,
HENRY LAURENS,
President of Congress."

His Excellency
Sir Henry Clinton, K. B. Philadelphia.

one we only penetrate into the barren cave of secrecy, where little can be known, and every thing may be misconceived; in the other, the mind is presented with a wide extended prospect of vegetative good, and sees a thousand blessings budding into existence.

But the expression, even within the compass of the abbe's meaning, sets out with an error, because it is made to declare that, which no man has authority to declare. Who can say that the happiness of mankind made *no part of the motives* which produced the alliance? To be able to declare this, a man must be possessed of the mind of all the parties concerned, and know that their motives were something else.

In proportion as the independence of America became contemplated and understood, the local advantages of it to the immediate actors, and the numerous benefits it promised mankind, appeared to be every day increasing; and we saw not a temporary good for the present race only, but a continued good to all posterity; these motives, therefore, added to those which preceded them, became the motives on the part of America, which led her to propose and agree to the treaty of alliance, as the best effectual method of extending and securing happiness; and therefore, with respect to us, the abbe is wrong.

France, on the other hand, was situated very differently. She was not acted upon by necessity to seek a friend, and therefore her motive in becoming one, has the strongest evidence of being good, and that which is so, must have some happiness for its object. With regard to herself, she saw a train of conveniences worthy her attention. By lessening the power of an enemy, whom at the same time, she sought neither to destroy nor distress, she gained an advantage without doing an evil, and created to herself a new friend by associating with a country in misfortune. The springs of thought that lead to actions of this kind, however political they may be, are nevertheless naturally beneficent; for in all causes, good or bad, it is necessary there should be a fitness in the mind, to enable it to act in character with the object: therefore, as a bad cause cannot be prosecuted with a good motive, so neither can a good cause be long supported by a bad one; and as no man acts without a motive, therefore in the present instance, as they cannot be bad, they must be admitted to be good. But the abbe sets out upon such an extended

scale, that he overlooks the degrees by which it is measured, and rejects the beginning of good, because the end comes not out at once.

It is true that bad motives may in some degree be brought to support a good cause or prosecute a good object; but it never continues long, which is not the case with France; for either the object will reform the mind, or the mind corrupt the object, or else not being able, either way, to get into unison, they will separate in disgust: and this natural, though unperceived progress of association or contention between the mind and the object, is the secret cause of fidelity or defection. Every object a man pursues, is, for the time, a kind of mistress to his mind: if both are good or bad, the union is natural; but if they are in reverse, and neither can seduce nor yet reform the other, the opposition grows into dislike and a separation follows.

When the cause of America first made its appearance on the stage of the universe, there were many, who, in the style of adventurers and fortune-hunters, were dangling in its train, and making their court to it with every profession of honor and attachment. They were loud in its praise and ostentatious in its service. Every place echoed with their ardor or their anger, and they seemed like men in love. But, alas! they were fortune-hunters. Their expectations were excited, but their minds were unimpressed; and finding it not to their purpose, nor themselves reformed by its influence, they ceased their suit, and in some instances deserted and betrayed it.

There were others, who at first beheld America with indifference, and unacquainted with her character were cautious of her company. They treated her as one, who, under the fair name of liberty, might conceal the hideous figure of anarchy, or the gloomy monster of tyranny. They knew not what she was. If fair, she was fair indeed. But still she was suspected, and though born among us appeared to be a stranger.

Accident with some, and curiosity with others, brought on a distant acquaintance. They ventured to look at her. They felt an inclination to speak to her. One intimacy led to another, till the suspicion wore away and a change of sentiment gradually stole upon the mind; and having no self interest to serve, no passion of dishonor to gratify, they became enamored of her innocence, and unaltered

by misfortune or uninfluenced by success, shared with fidelity in the varieties of her fate.

This declaration of the abbe's respecting motives, has led me, unintentionally into a train of metaphysical reasoning; but there was no other avenue by which it could so properly be approached. To place presumption against presumption, assertion against assertion, is a mode of opposition that has no effect; and therefore the more eligible method was to show that the declaration does not correspond with the natural progress of the mind, and the influence it has upon our conduct. I shall now quit this part and proceed to what I have before stated, namely that it is not so properly the motives which produced the alliance, as the consequences to be produced from it, that mark out the field of philosophical reflection.

It is an observation I have already made in some former publications, that the circle of civilization is yet incomplete. Mutual wants have formed the individuals of each country into a kind of national society, and here the progress of civilization has stopped. For it is easy to see, that nations with regard to each other (notwithstanding the ideal civil law, which every one explains as it suits him) are like individuals in a state of nature. They are regulated by no fixed principle, governed by no compulsive law, and each does independently what it pleases or what it can.

Were it possible we could have known the world when in a state of barbarism, we might have concluded that it never could be brought into the order we now see it. The untamed mind was then as hard, if not harder, to work upon in its individual state, than the national mind is in its present one. Yet we have seen the accomplishment of the one, why then should we doubt that of the other?

There is a greater fitness in mankind to extend and complete the civilization of nations with each other at this day, than there was to begin it with the unconnected individuals at first; in the same manner that it is somewhat easier to put together the materials of a machine after they are formed, than it was to form them from original matter. The present condition of the world, differing so exceedingly from what it formerly was, has given a new cast to the mind of man, more than what he appears to be sensible of. The wants of the individual which first produced the idea of society, are now augmented into the wants of

the nation, and he is obliged to seek from another country what before he sought from the next person.

Letters, the tongue of the world, have in some measure brought all mankind acquainted, and by an extension of their uses are every day promoting some new friendship. Through them distant nations become capable of conversation, and losing by degrees the awkwardness of strangers, and the moroseness of suspicion, they learn to know and understand each other. Science, the partisan of no country, but the beneficent patroness of all, has liberally opened a temple where all may meet. Her influence on the mind, like the sun on the chilled earth, has long been preparing it for higher cultivation and further improvement. The philosopher of one country sees not an enemy in the philosopher of another: he takes his seat in the temple of science, and asks not who sits beside him.

This was not the condition of the barbarian world.— Then the wants of men were few and the objects within his reach. While he could acquire these, he lived in a state of individual independence; the consequence of which was, there were as many nations as persons, each contending with the other, to secure something which he had, or to obtain something which he had not. The world had then no business to follow, no studies to exercise the mind. Their time was divided between sloth and fatigue. Hunting and war were their chief occupations; sleep and food their principal enjoyments.

Now it is otherwise. A change in the mode of life has made it necessary to be busy; and man finds a thousand things to do now which before he did not. Instead of placing his ideas of greatness in the rude achievements of the savage, he studies arts, sciences, agriculture and commerce, the refinements of the gentleman, the principles of society, and the knowledge of the philosopher.

There are many things which in themselves are neither morally good nor bad, but they are productive of consequences, which are strongly marked with one or other of these characters. Thus commerce, though in itself a moral nullity, has had a considerable influence in tempering the human mind. It was the want of objects in the ancient world, which occasioned in them such a rude and perpetual turn for war. Their time hung on their hands without the means of employment. The indolence they lived in afforded leisure for mischief, and being all idle at

once, and equal in their circumstances, they were easily provoked or induced to action.

But the introduction of commerce furnished the world with objects, which, in their extent, reach every man and give him something to think about and something to do; by these his attention is mechanically drawn from the pursuits, which a state of indolence and an unemployed mind occasioned, and he trades with the same countries, which former ages, tempted by their productions, and too indolent to purchase them, would have gone to war with.

Thus, as I have already observed, the condition of the world being materially changed by the influence of science and commerce, it is put into a fitness not only to admit of, but to desire, an extension of civilization. The principal and almost only remaining enemy, it now has to encounter, is *prejudice;* for it is evidently the interest of mankind to agree and make the best of life. The world has undergone its divisions of empire, the several boundaries of which are known and settled. The idea of conquering countries, like the Greeks and Romans, does not now exist; and experience has exploded the notion of going to war for the sake of profit. In short, the objects for war are exceedingly diminished, and there is now left scarcely any thing to quarrel about, but what arises from that demon of society, prejudice, and the consequent sullenness and untractableness of the temper.

There is something exceedingly curious in the constitution and operation of prejudice. It has the singular ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind. Some passions and vices are but thinly scattered among mankind, and find only here and there a fitness of reception. But prejudice, like the spider, makes every place its home. It has neither taste nor choice of situation, and all that it requires is room. Every where, except in fire or water, a spider will live. So, let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking, let it be hot, cold, dark or light, lonely or inhabited, still prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live, like the spider, where there seems nothing to live on. If the one prepares her food by poisoning it to her palate and her use, the other does the same; and as several of our passions are strongly

characterized by the animal world, prejudice may be denominated the spider of the mind.

Perhaps no two events ever united so intimately and forcibly to combat and expel prejudice, as the revolution of America and the alliance with France. Their effects are felt, and their influence already extends as well to the old world as the new. Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution, more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. We see with other eyes; we hear with other ears; and think with other thoughts, than those we formerly used. We can look back on our own prejudices, as if they had been the prejudices of other people. We now see and know they were prejudices and nothing else; and, relieved from their shackles, enjoy a freedom of mind, we felt not before. It was not all the argument, however powerful, nor all the reasoning, however eloquent, that could have produced this change, so necessary to the extension of the mind, and the cordiality of the world, without the two circumstances of the revolution and the alliance.

Had America dropped quietly from Britain, no material change in sentiment had taken place. The same notions, prejudices, and conceits would have governed in both countries, as governed them before, and, still the slaves of error and education, they would have travelled on in the beaten track of vulgar and habitual thinking. But brought about by the means it has been, both with regard to ourselves, to France and England, every corner of the mind is swept of its cobwebs, poison and dust, and made fit for the reception of generous happiness.

Perhaps there never was an alliance on a broader basis, than that between America and France, and the progress of it is worth attending to. The countries had been enemies, not properly of themselves, but through the medium of England. They, originally had no quarrel with each other, nor any cause for one, but what arose from the interest of England, and her arming America against France. At the same time, the Americans at a distance from, and unacquainted with, the world, and tutored in all the prejudices which governed those who governed them, conceived it their duty to act as they were taught. In doing this, they expended their substance, to make conquests, not for themselves but for their masters, who in return treated them as slaves.

A long succession of insolent severity, and the separation finally occasioned by the commencement of hostilities at Lexington, on the 19th of April, 1775, naturally produced a new disposition of thinking. As the mind closed itself towards England, it opened itself towards the world, and our prejudices like our oppressions, underwent, though less observed, a mental examination; until we found the former as inconsistent with reason and benevolence, as the latter were repugnant to our civil and political rights.

While we were thus advancing by degrees into the wide field of extended humanity, the alliance with France was concluded. An alliance not formed for the mere purpose of a day, but on just and generous grounds, and with equal and mutual advantages; and the easy, affectionate manner in which the parties have since communicated, has made it an alliance not of courts only but of countries. There is now an union of mind as well as of interest; and our hearts as well as our prosperity call on us to support it.

The people of England not having experienced this change, had likewise no idea of it. They were hugging to their bosoms the same prejudices we were trampling beneath our feet; and they expected to keep a hold upon America, by that narrowness of thinking which America disdained. What they were proud of, we despised; and this is a principal cause why all their negotiations, constructed on this ground, have failed. We are now really another people, and cannot again go back to ignorance and prejudice. The mind once enlightened cannot again become dark. There is no possibility, neither is there any term to express the supposition by, of the mind *un*knowing any thing it already knows; and therefore all attempts on the part of England, fitted to the former habit of America, and on the expectation of their applying now, will be like persuading a seeing man to become blind, and a sensible one to turn an ideot. The first of which is unnatural and the other impossible.

As to the remark which the abbe makes on the one country being a monarchy and the other a republic, it can have no essential meaning. Forms of government have nothing to do with treaties. The former are the internal police of the countries severally; the latter their external police jointly: and so long as each performs its part, we have no more right or business to know how the one or the

other conducts its domestic affairs, than we have to inquire into the private concerns of a family.

But had the abbe reflected for a moment, he would have seen, that courts, or the governing powers of all countries, be their forms what they may, are relatively republics with each other. It is the first and true principle of alliance. Antiquity may have given precedence, and power will naturally create importance, but their equal right is never disputed. It may likewise be worthy of remarking, that a monarchical country can suffer nothing in its popular happiness by an alliance with a republican one; and republican governments have never been destroyed by their external connexions, but by some internal convulsion or contrivance. France has been in alliance with the republic of Switzerland for more than two hundred years, and still Switzerland retains her original form of government as entire as if she had been allied with a republic like herself; therefore this remark of the abbe should go for nothing. Besides it is best mankind should mix. There is ever something to learn, either of manners or principle; and it is by a free communication, without regard to domestic matters, that friendship is to be extended, and prejudice destroyed all over the world.

But notwithstanding the abbe's high professions in favor of liberty, he appears sometimes to forget himself, or that his theory is rather the child of his fancy than of his judgment: for in almost the same instant that he censures the alliance as not originally or sufficiently calculated for the happiness of mankind, he, by a figure of implication, accuses France for having acted so generously and unreservedly in concluding it. "Why did they (says he, meaning the court of France) tie themselves down by an inconsiderate treaty to conditions with the congress, which they might themselves have held in dependance by ample and regular supplies."

When an author undertakes to treat of public happiness he ought to be certain that he does not mistake passion for right, nor imagination for principle. Principle, like truth, needs no contrivance. It will ever tell its own tale, and tell it the same way. But where this is not the case, every page must be watched, recollected, and compared like an invented story.

I am surprised at this passage of the abbe's. It means nothing or it means ill; and in any case it shows the great

difference between speculative and practical knowledge. A treaty according to the abbe's language would have neither duration nor affection: it might have lasted to the end of the war, and then expired with it. But France, by acting in a style superior to the little politics of narrow thinking, has established a generous fame and won the love of a country she was before a stranger to. She had to treat with a people who thought as nature taught them; and, on her own part, she wisely saw, there was no present advantage to be obtained by unequal terms, which could balance the more lasting ones that might flow from a kind and generous beginning.

From this part the abbe advances into the secret transactions of the two cabinets of Versailles and Madrid respecting the independence of America; through which I mean not to follow him. It is a circumstance sufficiently striking without being commented on, that the former union of America with Britain produced a power, which in her hands, was becoming dangerous to the world: and there is no improbability in supposing, that had the latter known as much of the strength of the former, before she began the quarrel as she has known since, that instead of attempting to reduce her to unconditional submission, she would have proposed to her the conquest of Mexico. But from the countries separately, Spain has nothing to apprehend, though from their union she had more to fear than any other power in Europe.

The part which I shall more particularly confine myself to, is that wherein the abbe takes an opportunity of complimenting the British ministry with high encomiums of admiration, on their rejecting the offered mediation of the court of Madrid, in 1779.

It must be remembered that before Spain joined France in the war, she undertook the office of a mediator and made proposals to the British king and ministry so exceedingly favorable to their interest, that had they been accepted, would have become inconvenient, if not inadmissible, to America. These proposals were nevertheless rejected by the British cabinet; on which the abbe says,—

"It is in such a circumstance as this; it is in the time when noble pride elevates the soul superior to all terror; when nothing is seen more dreadful than the shame of receiving the law, and when there is no doubt or hesitation which to choose, between ruin and dishonor: it is then, that the greatness of a nation is displayed. I acknowledge

however, that men, accustomed to judge of things by the event, call great and perilous resolutions, heroism or madness, according to the good or bad success with which they have been attended. If then, I should be asked, what is the name which shall in years to come be given to the firmness, which was in this moment exhibited by the English, I shall answer that I do not know. But that which it deserves I know. I know that the annals of the world hold out to us but rarely, the august and majestic spectacle of a nation, which chooses rather to renounce its duration than its glory."

In this paragraph the conception is lofty and the expression elegant, but the coloring is too high for the original, and the likeness fails through an excess of graces. To fit the powers of thinking and the turn of language to the subject, so as to bring out a clear conclusion that shall hit the point in question and nothing else, is the true criterion of writing. But the greater part of the abbe's writings (if he will pardon me the remark) appear to me uncentral and burdened with variety. They represent a beautiful wilderness without paths; in which the eye is diverted by every thing without being particularly directed to any thing; and in which it is agreeable to be lost, and difficult to find the way out.

Before I offer any other remark on the spirit and composition of the above passage, I shall compare it with the circumstance it alludes to.

The circumstance then does not deserve the encomium. The rejection was not prompted by her fortitude but her vanity. She did not view it as a case of despair or even of extreme danger, and consequently the determination to renounce her duration rather than her glory, cannot apply to the condition of her mind. She had then high expectations of subjugating America, and had no other naval force against her than France; neither was she certain that rejecting the mediation of Spain would combine that power with France. New mediations might arise more favorable than those she had refused. But if they should not, and Spain should join, she still saw that it would only bring out her naval force against France and Spain, which was not wanted and could not be employed against America, and habits of thinking had taught her to believe herself superior to both.

But in any case to which the consequence might point, there was nothing to impress her with the idea of renounc-

ing her duration. It is not the policy of Europe to suffer the extinction of any power, but only to lop off or prevent its dangerous increase. She was likewise freed by situation from the internal and immediate horrors of invasion; was rolling in dissipation and looking for conquests; and though she suffered nothing but the expense of war, she still had a greedy eye to magnificent reimbursement.

But if the abbe is delighted with high and striking singularities of character, he might, in America, have found ample field for encomium. Here was a people, who could not know what part the world would take for, or against them; and who were venturing on an untried scheme, in opposition to a power, against which more formidable nations had failed. They had every thing to learn but the principles which supported them, and every thing to procure that was necessary for their defence. They have at times seen themselves as low as distress could make them, without showing the least decrease of fortitude; and been raised again by the most unexpected events, without discovering an unmanly discomposure of joy. To hesitate or to despair are conditions equally unknown in America. Her mind was prepared for every thing; because her original and final resolution of succeeding or perishing included all possible circumstances.

The rejection of the British propositions in the year 1778, circumstanced as America was at that time, is a far greater instance of unshaken fortitude than the refusal of the Spanish mediation by the court of London: and other historians, besides the abbe, struck with the vastness of her conduct therein, have, like himself, attributed it to a circumstance, which was then unknown, the alliance with France. Their error shows their idea of its greatness; because in order to account for it, they have sought a cause suited to its magnitude, without knowing that the cause existed in the principles of the country.*

* Extract from "A short Review of the present Reign," in England, p. 45, in the new Annual Register. for the year 1780.

"The commissioners, who, in consequence of Lord North's conciliatory bills, went over to America, to propose terms of peace to the colonies, were wholly unsuccessful. The concessions which formerly would have been received with the utmost gratitude, were rejected with disdain. Now was the time of American pride and haughtiness. It is probable, however, that it was not pride and haughtiness alone that dictated the resolutions of congress, but a distrust of the sincerity of the offers of Britain, a determination not to give up their independence, and, *above all, the engagements into which they had entered by their late treaty with France.*"

But this passionate encomium of the abbe is deservedly subject to moral and philosophical objections. It is the effusion of wild thinking, and has a tendency to prevent that humanity of reflection which the criminal conduct of Britain enjoins on her as a duty.—It is a laudanum to courtly iniquity.—It keeps in intoxicated sleep the conscience of a nation; and more mischief is effected by wrapping up guilt in splendid excuse, than by directly patronizing it.

Britain is now the only country which holds the world in disturbance and war; and instead of paying compliments to the excess of her crimes, the abbe would have appeared much more in character, had he put to her, or to her monarch, this serious question—

Are there not miseries enough in the world, too difficult to be encountered and too pointed to be borne, without studying to enlarge the list and arming it with new destruction? Is life so very long that it is necessary, nay even a duty, to shake the sand and hasten out the period of duration? Is the path so elegantly smooth, so decked on every side and carpeted with joys, that wretchedness is wanted to enrich it as a soil? Go ask thine aching heart, when sorrow from a thousand causes wounds it, go ask thy sickened self, when every medicine fails, whether this be the case or not?

Quitting my remarks on this head, I proceed to another, in which the abbe has let loose a vein of ill nature, and, what is still worse, of injustice.

After cavilling at the treaty, he goes on to characterize the several parties combined in the war. "Is it possible," says the abbe, "that a strict union should long subsist amongst confederates, of characters so opposite as the hasty, light, disdainful Frenchman, the jealous, haughty, sly, slow, circumspect Spaniard, and the American, who is secretly snatching a look at the mother country, and would rejoice, were they compatible with his independence, at the disasters of his allies?"

To draw foolish portraits of each other, is a mode of attack and reprisal, which the greater part of mankind are fond of indulging. The serious philosopher should be above it, more especially in cases from which no good can arise, and mischief may, and where no received provocation can palliate the offence.—The abbe might have invented a difference of character for every country in the world, and they in return might find others for him, till in the war of

wit all real character is lost. The pleasantry of one nation or the gravity of another may, by a little pencilling, be distorted into whimsical features, and the painter become as much laughed at as the painting.

But why did not the abbe look a little deeper and bring forth the excellencies of the several parties?—Why did he not dwell with pleasure on that greatness of character, that superiority of heart, which has marked the conduct of France in her conquests, and which has forced an acknowledgment even from Britain?

There is one line, at least (and many others might be discovered) in which the confederates unite; which is, that of a rival eminence in their treatment of their enemies. Spain in her conquest of Minorca and the Bahama islands, confirms this remark. America has been invariable in her lenity from the beginning of the war, notwithstanding the high provocations she has experienced. It is England only who has been insolent and cruel.

But why must America be charged with a crime undeserved by her conduct, more so by her principles, and which, if a fact, would be fatal to her honor. I mean the want of attachment to her allies, or rejoicing in their disasters. She, it is true, has been assiduous in showing to the world that she was not the aggressor towards England, and that the quarrel was not of her seeking, or, at that time even of her wishing. But to draw inferences from her candor, and even from her justification, to stab her character by (and I see nothing else from which they can be supposed to be drawn) is unkind and unjust.

Does her rejection of the British propositions in 1778, before she knew of any alliance with France, correspond with the abbe's description of her mind? Does a single instance of her conduct since that time justify it?—But there is a still better evidence to apply to, which is, that of all the mails which, at different times, have been waylaid on the road, in divers parts of America, and taken and carried into New-York, and from which the most secret and confidential private letters, as well as those from authority, have been published, not one of them, I repeat it, not a single one of them, gave countenance to such a charge.

This is not a country where men are under government restraint in speaking; and if there is any kind of restraint, it arises from a fear of popular resentment. Now if nothing in her private or public correspondence favors such a

suggestion, and if the general disposition of the country is such as to make it unsafe for a man to show an appearance of joy at any disaster to her ally, on what grounds, I ask, can the accusation stand? What company the abbe may have kept in France, we cannot know; but this we know, that the account he gives does not apply to America.

Had the abbe been in America at the time the news arrived of the disaster of the fleet under count de Grasse, in the West-Indies, he would have seen his vast mistake. Neither do I remember any instance, except the loss of Charleston, in which the public mind suffered more severe and pungent concern, or underwent more agitations of hope and apprehension as to the truth or falsehood of the report. Had the loss been all our own, it could not have had a deeper effect, yet it was not one of these cases which reached to the independence of America.

In the geographical account which the abbe gives of the thirteen states, he is so exceedingly erroneous, that to attempt a particular refutation would exceed the limits I have prescribed to myself. And as it is a matter neither political, historical, or sentimental, and which can always be contradicted by the extent and natural circumstances of the country, I shall pass it over; with this additional remark, that I never yet saw an European description of America that was true, neither can any person gain a just idea of it, but by coming to it.

Though I have already extended this letter beyond what I at first proposed, I am, nevertheless, obliged to omit many observations, I originally designed to have made. I wish there had been no occasion for making any. But the wrong ideas which the abbe's work had a tendency to excite, and the prejudicial impressions they might make, must be an apology for my remarks, and the freedom with which they are made.

I observe the abbe has made a sort of epitome of a considerable part of the pamphlet Common Sense, and introduced it in that form into his publication. But there are other places where the abbe has borrowed freely from the said pamphlet without acknowledging it. The difference between society and government, with which the pamphlet opens, is taken from it, and in some expressions almost literally, into the abbe's work, as if originally his own; and through the whole of the abbe's remarks on this head, the

idea in Common Sense is so closely copied and pursued, that the difference is only in words, and in the arrangement of the thoughts, and not in the thoughts themselves.*

*COMMON SENSE.

"Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins."

"Society is produced by our wants and governments by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness *positively*, by uniting our affections—the latter *negatively*, by restraining our vices."

ABBE RAYNAL.

"Care must be taken not to confound together society with government. That they may be known distinctly, their origin should be considered."

"Society originates in the wants of men, government in their vices. Society tends always to good—government ought always to tend to the repressing of evil."

In the following paragraphs there is less likeness in the language, but the ideas in the one are evidently copied from the other.

"In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons, meeting in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest; they will then represent the peopling of any country or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto. The strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance of another, who, in his turn, requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness; but *one* man might labor out the common period of life, without accomplishing any thing; after he had felled his timber, he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed—hunger, in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay, even misfortune, would be death—for although neither might be immediately mortal, yet either of them would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die. Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal benefits of which would supersede and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary, while they remained perfectly just to each other. But as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it unavoidably happens, that in proportion

"Man, thrown, as it were, by chance upon the globe, surrounded by all the evils of nature, obliged continually to defend and protect his life against the storms and tempests of the air, against the inundations of water, against the fire of volcanoes, against the intemperance of frigid and torrid zones, against the sterility of the earth which refuses him aliment, or its baneful fecundity, which makes poison spring up beneath his feet—in short against the teeth and claws of savage beasts, who dispute with him his habitation and his prey, and, attacking his person, seem resolved to render themselves rulers of this globe, of which he thinks himself to be the master: man, in this state, alone and abandoned to himself, could do nothing for his preservation. It was necessary, therefore, that he should unite himself, and associate with his like, in order to bring together their strength and intelligence in common stock. It is by this union that he has triumphed over so many evils, that he has fashioned this globe to his use, restrained the rivers, subjugated the seas, insured his subsistence, conquered a part of the animals in obliging them to serve him, and driven others far from his empire, to the depths of deserts or of woods, where their number diminishes from age to age.—What a man alone would not have been able to effect, men have executed in concert: and altogether they preserve their work. Such is the origin, such the advantages, and the end of society.—Government owes its birth to the necessity of preventing and repressing

But as it is time that I should come to the end of my letter, I shall forbear all future observations on the abbe's work, and take a concise view of the state of public affairs, since the time in which that performance was published.

A mind habited to actions of meanness and injustice, commits them without reflection, or with a very partial one; for on what other ground than this, can we account for the declaration of war against the Dutch? To gain an idea of the politics which actuated the British ministry to this measure, we must enter into the opinion which they, and the English in general, had formed of the temper of the Dutch nation; and from thence infer what their expectation of the consequences would be.

Could they have imagined that Holland would have seriously made a common cause with France, Spain and America, the British ministry would never have dared to provoke them. It would have been a madness in politics to have done so, unless their views were to hasten on a period of such emphatic distress, as should justify the concessions which they saw they must one day or other make to the world, and for which they wanted an apology to themselves.—There is a temper in some men which seeks a pretence for submission. Like a ship disabled in action, and unfitted to continue it, it waits the approach of a still larger one to strike to, and feels relief at the opportunity. Whether this is greatness or littleness of mind, I am not inquiring into. I should suppose it to be the latter, because it proceeds from the want of knowing how to bear misfortune in its original state.

But the subsequent conduct of the British cabinet has shown that this was not their plan of politics, and consequently their motives must be sought for in another line.

The truth is, that the British had formed a very humble opinion of the Dutch nation. They looked on them as a people who would submit to any thing; that they might insult them as they liked, plunder them as they pleased, and still the Dutch dared not to be provoked.

as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other, and this remissness will point out the necessity of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue."

the injuries which the associated individuals had to fear from one another. It is the sentinel who watches, in order that the common laborers be not disturbed."

If this be taken as the opinion of the British cabinet, the measure is easily accounted for; because it goes on the supposition, that when, by a declaration of hostilities, they had robbed the Dutch of some millions sterling (and to rob them was popular) they could make peace with them again whenever they pleased, and on almost any terms the British ministry should propose. And no sooner was the plundering committed, than the accommodation was set on foot and failed.

When once the mind loses the sense of its own dignity, it loses, likewise, the ability of judging of it in another. And the American war has thrown Britain into such a variety of absurd situations, that, arguing from herself, she sees not in what conduct national dignity consists in other countries. From Holland she expected duplicity and submission, and this mistake arose from her having acted, in a number of instances during the present war, the same character herself.

To be allied to, or connected with, Britain, seems to be an unsafe and impolitic situation. Holland and America are instances of the reality of this remark. Make those countries the allies of France or Spain, and Britain will court them with civility, and treat them with respect; make them her own allies, and she will insult and plunder them. In the first case, she feels some apprehensions at offending them, because they have support at hand; in the latter, those apprehensions do not exist. Such, however, has hitherto been her conduct.

Another measure which has taken place since the publication of the abbe's work, and likewise since the time of my beginning this letter, is the change in the British ministry. What line the new cabinet will pursue respecting America, is at this time unknown; neither is it very material, unless they are seriously disposed to a general and honorable peace.

Repeated experience has shown, not only the impracticability of conquering America, but the still higher impossibility of conquering her mind, or recalling her back to her former condition of thinking. Since the commencement of the war, which is now approaching to eight years, thousands and tens of thousands have advanced, and are daily advancing into the first state of manhood, who know nothing of Britain but as a barbarous enemy, and to whom the independence of America appears as much the

natural and established government of the country, as that of England does to an Englishman. And on the other hand thousands of the aged, who had British ideas, have dropped, and are daily dropping, from the stage of business and life. The natural progress of generation and decay operates every hour to the disadvantage of Britain. Time and death, hard enemies to contend with, fight constantly against her interest; and the bills of mortality, in every part of America, are the thermometers of her decline. The children in the streets are from their cradle bred to consider her as their only foe. They hear of her cruelties; of their fathers, uncles, and kindred killed; they see the remains of burnt and destroyed houses, and the common tradition of the school they go to, tells them, *those things were done by the British.*

These are circumstances which the mere English state politician, who considers man only in a state of manhood, does not attend to. He gets entangled with parties coeval or equal with himself at home, and thinks not how fast the rising generation in America is growing beyond knowledge of them, or they of him. In a few years all personal remembrance will be lost, and who is king or minister in England, will be little known and scarcely inquired after.

The new British administration is composed of persons who have ever been against the war, and who have constantly reprobated all the violent measures of the former one. They considered the American war as destructive to themselves, and opposed it on that ground. But what are these things to America? She has nothing to do with English parties. The ins and the outs are nothing to her. It is the whole country she is at war with, or must be at peace with.

Were every minister in England a Chatham, it would now weigh little or nothing in the scale of American politics. Death has preserved to the memory of this statesman, *that fame*, which he, by living, would have lost. His plans and opinions, towards the latter part of his life, would have been attended with as many evil consequences, and as much reprobated here, as those of lord North; and considering him a wise man, they abound with inconsistencies amounting to absurdities.

It has apparently been the fault of many in the late minority, to suppose, that America would agree to certain terms with them, were they in place, which she would not even listen to, from the then administration. This idea can

answer no other purpose than to prolong the war; and Britain may, at the expense of many more millions, learn the fatality of such mistakes. If the new ministry wisely avoid this hopeless policy, they will prove themselves better pilots, and wiser men than they are conceived to be; for it is every day expected to see their bark strike upon some hidden rock and go to pieces.

But there is a line in which they may be great. A more brilliant opening, needs not to present itself; and it is such an one, as true magnanimity would improve, and humanity rejoice in.

A total reformation is wanted in England. She wants an expanded mind,—a heart which embraces the universe. Instead of shutting herself up in an island, and quarrelling with the world, she would derive more lasting happiness, and acquire more real riches, by generously mixing with it, and bravely saying, I am the enemy of none. It is not now a time for little contrivances or artful politics. The European world is too experienced to be imposed upon, and America too wise to be duped. It must be something new and masterly that can succeed. The idea of seducing America from her independence, or corrupting her from her alliance, is a thought too little for a great mind, and impossible for any honest one, to attempt. Whenever politics are applied to debauch mankind from their integrity, and dissolve the virtue of human nature, they become detestable; and to be a statesman on this plan is to be a commissioned villain. He who aims at it, leaves a vacancy in his character, which may be filled up with the worst of epithets.

If the disposition of England should be such, as not to agree to a general and honorable peace, and the war must at all events, continue longer, I cannot help wishing, that the alliances which America has or may enter into, may become the only objects of the war. She wants an opportunity of showing to the world, that she holds her honor as dear and sacred as her independence, and that she will in no situation forsake those, whom no negotiations could induce to forsake her. Peace to every reflecting mind, is a desirable object; but *that peace* which is accompanied with a ruined character, becomes a crime to the seducer, and a curse upon the seduced.

But where is the impossibility or even the great difficulty of England's forming a friendship with France and Spain.

and making it a national virtue to renounce for ever those prejudiced inveteracies it has been her custom to cherish; and which, while they serve to sink her with an increasing enormity of debt, by involving her in fruitless wars, become likewise the bane of her repose, and the destruction of her manners. We had once the fetters that she has now, but experience has shown us the mistake, and thinking justly has set us right.

The true idea of a great nation is that which extends and promotes the principles of universal society: whose mind rises above the atmospheres of local thoughts, and considers mankind, of whatever nation or profession they may be, as the work of one Creator. The rage for conquest has had its fashion, and its day. Why may not the amiable virtues have the same? The Alexanders and Cæsars of antiquity have left behind them their monuments of destruction, and are remembered with hatred; while those more exalted characters, who first taught society and science, are blest with the gratitude of every age and country. Of more use was *one* philosopher, though a heathen, to the world, than all the heathen conquerors that ever existed.

Should the present revolution be distinguished by opening a new system of extended civilization, it will receive from heaven the highest evidence of approbation; and as this is a subject to which the abbe's powers are so eminently suited, I recommend it to his attention, with the affection of a friend, and the ardor of a universal citizen.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since closing the foregoing letter, some intimations respecting a general peace have made their way to America. On what authority or foundation they stand, or how near or remote such an event may be, are circumstances I am not inquiring into. But as the subject must sooner or later become a matter of serious attention, it may not be improper, even at this early period, candidly to investigate some points that are connected with it, or lead towards it.

The independence of America is at this moment as firmly established as that of any other country in a state of

war. It is not length of time, but power that gives stability. Nations at war, know nothing of each other on the score of antiquity. It is their present and immediate strength, together with their connexions, that must support them. To which we may add, that a right which originated to-day, is as much a right, as if it had the sanction of a thousand years; and therefore the independence and present governments of America are in no more danger of being subverted, because they are modern, than that of England is secure, because it is ancient.

The politics of Britain, so far as respects America, were originally conceived in idiotism, and acted in madness. There is not a step which bears the smallest trace of rationality. In her management of the war, she has labored to be wretched, and studied to be hated; and in all her former propositions for accommodation, she has discovered a total ignorance of mankind, and of those natural and unalterable sensations, by which they are so generally governed. How she may conduct herself in the present or future business of negotiating a peace, is yet to be proved.

He is a weak politician who does not understand human nature, and penetrate into the effect which measures of government will have upon the mind. All the miscarriages of Britain have arisen from this defect. The former ministry acted as if they supposed mankind to be *without a mind;* and the present ministry, as if America was *without a memory.* The one must have supposed we were incapable of feeling; and the other, that we could not remember injuries.

There is likewise another line in which politicians mistake, which is, that of not rightly calculating, or rather of misjudging, the consequences which any given circumstance will produce. Nothing is more frequent, as well in common as in political life, than to hear people complain, that such or such means produced an event directly contrary to their intentions. But the fault lies in their not judging rightly what the event would be; for the means produced only its proper and natural consequences.

It is very probable that in a treaty of peace, Britain will contend for some post or other in North-America, perhaps Canada or Halifax, or both: and I infer this from the known deficiency of her politics, which have ever yet made use of means, whose natural event was against both her interest and her expectation. But the question with her

ought to be, whether it is worth her while to hold them, and what will be the consequences.

Respecting Canada, one or other of the two following will take place, *viz.* if Canada should become populous, it will revolt; and if it does not become so, it will not be worth the expense of holding. And the same may be said of Halifax, and the country round it. But Canada *never will* be populous; neither is there any occasion for contrivances on one side or the other, for nature alone will do the whole.

Britain may put herself to great expenses in sending settlers to Canada: but the descendants of those settlers will be Americans, as other descendants have been before them. They will look round and see the neighboring states sovereign and free, respected abroad and trading at large with the world; and the natural love of liberty, the advantages of commerce, the blessings of independence, and of a happier climate, and a richer soil, will draw them southward; and the effect will be, that Britain will sustain the expense, and America reap the advantage.

One would think that the experience which Britain has had of America, would entirely sicken her of all thoughts of continental colonization, and any part she might retain, will only become to her a field of jealousy and thorns, of debate and contention, for ever struggling for privileges, and meditating revolt. She may form new settlements, but they will be for us; they will become part of the United States of America; and that against all her contrivances to prevent it, or without any endeavors of ours to promote it. In the first place she cannot draw from them a revenue, until they are able to pay one, and when they are so, they will be above subjection. Men soon become attached to the soil they live upon, and incorporated with the prosperity of the place; and it signifies but little what opinions they come over with, for time, interest, and new connexions will render them obsolete, and the next generation know nothing of them.

Were Britain truly wise, she would lay hold of the present opportunity to disentangle herself from all continental embarrassments in North-America, and that not only to avoid future broils and troubles, but to save expenses. To speak explicitly on the matter, I would not, were I an European power, have Canada, under the conditions that Britain must retain it, could it be given to me. It is one

of those kind of dominions that is, and ever will be, a constant charge upon any foreign holder.

As to Halifax, it will become useless to England after the present war, and the loss of the United States. A harbor, when the dominion is gone, for the purpose of which only it was wanted, can be attended only with expense. There are, I doubt not, thousands of people in England, who suppose, that these places are a profit to the nation, whereas they are directly the contrary, and instead of producing any revenue, a considerable part of the revenue of England is annually drawn off, to support the expense of holding them.

Gibraltar is another instance of national ill-policy. A post which in time of peace is not wanted, and in time of war is of no use, must at all times be useless. Instead of affording protection to a navy, it requires the aid of one to maintain it. To suppose that Gibraltar commands the Mediterranean, or the pass into it, or the trade of it, is to suppose a detected falsehood; because though Britain holds the post, she has lost the other three, and every benefit she expected from it. And to say that all this happens because it is besieged by land and water, is to say nothing, for this will always be the case in time of war, while France and Spain keep up superior fleets, and Britain holds the place. So that, though, as an impenetrable, inaccessible rock, it may be held by the one, it is always in the power of the other to render it useless and excessively chargeable.

I should suppose that one of the principal objects of Spain in besieging it, is to show to Britain, that though she may not take it, she can command it, that is she can shut it up, and prevent its being used as a harbor, though not as a garrison. But the short way to reduce Gibraltar is to attack the British fleet; for Gibraltar is as dependant on a fleet for support, as a bird is on its wing for food, and when wounded there it starves.

There is another circumstance which the people of England have not only not attended to, but seem to be utterly ignorant of, and that is, the difference between permanent power and accidental power, considered in a national sense.

By permanent power, I mean, a natural, inherent and perpetual ability in a nation, which though always in being, may not be always in action, or not advantageously

directed; and by accidental power, I mean, a fortunate or accidental disposition or exercise of national strength, in whole or in part.

There undoubtedly was a time when any one European nation, with only eight or ten ships of war, equal to the present ships of the line, could have carried terror to all others, who had not began to build a navy, however great their natural ability might be for that purpose: but this can be considered only as accidental, and not as a standard to compare permanent power by, and could last no longer than until those powers built as many or more ships than the former. After this a larger fleet was necessary, in order to be superior; and a still larger would again supersede it. And thus mankind have gone on building fleet upon fleet, as occasion or situation dictated. And this reduces it to an original question, which is: Which power can build and man the largest number of ships? The natural answer to which, is, that power which has the largest revenue and the greatest number of inhabitants, provided its situation of coast affords sufficient conveniences.

France being a nation on the continent of Europe, and Britain an island in its neighborhood, each of them derived different ideas from their different situations. The inhabitants of Britain could carry on no foreign trade, nor stir from the spot they dwelt upon, without the assistance of shipping; but this was not the case with France. The idea therefore of a navy did not arise to France from the same original and immediate necessity which produced it to England. But the question is, that when both of them turn their attention, and employ their revenues the same way, which can be superior?

The annual revenue of France is nearly double that of England, and her number of inhabitants more than twice as many. Each of them has the same length of coast on the channel, besides which, France has several hundred miles extent on the bay of Biscay, and an opening on the Mediterranean: and every day proves that practice and exercise make sailors as well as soldiers in one country as well as another.

If then Britain can maintain an hundred ships of the line, France can as well support an hundred and fifty, because her revenues and her population are as equal to the one, as those of England are to the other. And the only reason why she has not done it, is because she has not till

very lately attended to it. But when she sees, as she now does, that a navy is the first engine of power, she can easily accomplish it.

England very falsely, and ruinously for herself, infers, that because she had the advantage of France, while France had the smaller navy, that for that reason it is always to be so. Whereas it may be clearly seen, that the strength of France has never yet been tried on a navy, and that she is able to be as superior to England in the extent of a navy, as she is in the extent of her revenues and her population. And England may lament the day, when, by her insolence and injustice, she provoked in France a maritime disposition.

It is in the power of the combined fleets to conquer every island in the West-Indies, and reduce all the British navy in those places. For were France and Spain to send their whole naval force in Europe to those islands, it would not be in the power of Britain to follow them with an equal force. She would still be twenty or thirty ships inferior, were she to send every vessel she had, and in the mean time all the foreign trade of England would lay exposed to the Dutch.

It is a maxim, which, I am persuaded, will ever hold good, and more especially in naval operations, that a great power ought never to move in detachments, if it can possibly be avoided; but to go with its whole force to some important object, the reduction of which shall have a decisive effect upon the war. Had the whole of the French and Spanish fleets in Europe come last spring to the West-Indies, every island had been their own, Rodney their prisoner and his fleet their prize. From the United States the combined fleets can be supplied with provisions, without the necessity of drawing them from Europe, which is not the case with England.

Accident has thrown some advantages in the way of England, which, from the inferiority of her navy, she had not a right to expect. For though she had been obliged to fly before the combined fleets, yet Rodney has twice had the fortune to fall in with detached squadrons, to which he was superior in numbers: the first off cape St. Vincent, where he had nearly two to one, and the other in the West-Indies, where he had a majority of six ships. Victories of this kind almost produce themselves. They are won without honor, and suffered without disgrace: and

are ascribable to the chance of meeting, not to the superiority of fighting. For the same admiral, under whom they were obtained, was unable, in three former engagements, to make the least impression on a fleet consisting of an equal number of ships with his own, and compounded for the events by declining the actions.*

To conclude: if it may be said that Britain has numerous enemies, it likewise proves that she has given numerous offences. Insolence is sure to provoke hatred, whether in a nation or an individual. The want of manners in the British court may be seen even in its birth-days' and new-years' odes, which are calculated to infatuate the vulgar, and disgust the man of refinement: and her former overbearing rudeness, and insufferable injustice on the seas, have made every commercial nation her foe. Her fleets were employed as engines of prey; and acted on the surface of the deep the character which the shark does beneath it. On the other hand, the combined powers are taking a popular part, and will render their reputation immortal, by establishing the perfect freedom of the ocean, to which all countries have a right, and are interested in accomplishing. The sea is the world's highway; and he who arrogates a prerogative over it, transgresses the right, and justly brings on himself the chastisement of nations.

Perhaps it might be of some service to the future tranquillity of mankind, were an article introduced into the next general peace, that no one nation should, in time of peace, exceed a certain number of ships of war. Something of this kind seems necessary; for according to the present fashion, half the world will get upon the water, and there appears to be no end to the extent to which navies may be carried. Another reason is, that navies add nothing to the manners or morals of a people. The sequestered life which attends the service, prevents the opportunities of society, and is too apt to occasion a coarseness of ideas and of language, and that more in ships of war than in the commercial employ; because in the latter they mix more with the world, and are nearer related to it. I mention this remark as a general one: and not applied to any one country more than to another.

Britain has now had the trial of above seven years, with an expense of nearly an hundred million pounds sterling:

* See the accounts, either English or French, of three actions, in the West-Indies, between count de Guichen and admiral Rodney, in 1780.

and every month in which she delays to conclude a peace, costs her another million sterling, over and above her ordinary expenses of government, which are a million more; so that her total *monthly* expense is two million pounds sterling, which is equal to the whole *yearly* expense of America, all charges included. Judge then who is best able to continue it.

She has likewise many atonements to make to an injured world, as well in one quarter as in another. And instead of pursuing that temper of arrogance, which serves only to sink her in the esteem, and entail on her the dislike, of all nations, she would do well to reform her manners, retrench her expenses, live peaceably with her neighbors, and think of war no more.

Philadelphia, August 21, 1782.

END OF THE LETTER TO ABBE RAYNAL.

DISSERTATIONS
ON
GOVERNMENT,
THE
AFFAIRS OF THE BANK,
AND
PAPER MONEY.

PREFACE.

I HERE present the public with a new performance. Some parts of it are more particularly adapted to the state of Pennsylvania, on the present state of its affairs: but there are others which are on a larger scale. The time bestowed on this work has not been long, the whole of it being written and printed during the short recess of the assembly.

As to parties, merely considered as such, I am attached to no particular one. There are such things as right and wrong in the world, and so far as these are parties against each other, the signature of *Common Sense*, is properly employed.

THOMAS PAINE.

Philadelphia, Feb. 18, 1786.

DISSERTATIONS ON GOVERNMENT, &c.

Every government, let its form be what it may, contains within itself a principle common to all, which is, that of a sovereign power, or a power over which there is no control, and which controls all others: and as it is impossible to construct a form of government in which this power does not exist, so there must of necessity be a place, if it may be so called, for it to exist in.

In despotic monarchies this power is lodged in a single person, or sovereign. His will is law; which he declares, alters, or revokes as he pleases, without being accountable to any power for so doing. Therefore, the only modes of redress, in countries so governed, are by petition or insurrection. And this is the reason we so frequently hear of insurrections in despotic governments; for as there are but two modes of redress, this is one them.

Perhaps it may be said that as the united resistance of the people is able, by force, to control the will of the sovereign, that, therefore, the controlling power lodges in them; but it must be understood that I am speaking of such powers only as are constituent parts of the government, not of those powers which are externally applied to resist and overturn it.

In republics, such as those established in America, the sovereign power, or the power over which there is no control and which controls all others, remains where nature

placed it—in the people: for the people in Amer the fountain of power. It remains there as a matt right, recognized in the constitutions of the country, the exercise of it is constitutional and legal. This reignty is exercised in electing and deputing a certain ber of persons to represent and act for the whole, and if they do not act right, may be displaced by the power that placed them there, and others elected deputed in their stead, and the wrong measures of fa representatives corrected and brought right by thism Therefore the republican form and principle leave room for insurrection, because it provides and establ a rightful means in its stead.

In countries under a despotic form of government exercise of this power is an assumption of sovereignt wresting it from the person in whose hand their for government has placed it, and the exercise of it is styled rebellion. Therefore the despotic form of go ment knows no intermediate space between being slave being rebels.

I shall in this place offer an observation which, th not immediately connected with my subject, is ver urally deduced from it, which is, that the nature, if I so call it, of a government over any people may b certained from the modes which the people pursue t tain redress of grievances; for like causes will produc effects. And therefore the government which Brita tempted to erect over America could be no other th despotism, because it left to the Americans no other m of redress than those which are left to people under potic governments, petition and resistance: and the A mans, without ever attending to a comparison of the went into the same steps which such people go into cause no other could be pursued: and this similari effects leads up to, and ascertains, the similarity of causes or governments which produced them.

But to return. The repository where the sove power is placed is the first criterion of distinction bet a country under a despotic form of government and a country. In a country under a despotic government sovereign is the only free man in it. In a republic people retaining the sovereignty themselves naturally necessarily retain their freedom with it. For wherever sovereignty is, there must the freedom be.

As the repository where the sovereign power is lodged is the first criterion of distinction, so the second is the principles on which it is administered.

A despotic government knows no principle but *will*. Whatever the sovereign wills to do, the government admits him the inherent right, and the uncontrolled power of doing. He is restrained by no fixed rule of right and wrong, for he makes the right and wrong himself and as he pleases. If he happens (for a miracle may happen) to be a man of consummate wisdom, justice and moderation, of a mild affectionate disposition, disposed to business, and understanding and promoting the general good, all the beneficial purposes of government will be answered under his administration, and the people so governed, may, while this is the case, be prosperous and easy. But as there can be no security that this disposition will last, and this administration continue, and still less security that his successor shall have the same qualities and pursue the same measures; therefore no people exercising their reason and understanding their rights, would of their own choice, invest any one man with such a power.

Neither is it consistent to suppose the knowledge of any one man competent to the exercise of such a power. A sovereign of this sort, is brought up in such a distant line of life; lives so remote from the people, and from a knowledge of every thing which relates to their local situations and interests, that he can know nothing from experience and observation, and all which he does know he must be told. Sovereign power without sovereign knowledge, that is, a full knowledge of all the matters over which that power is to be exercised, is a something which contradicts itself.

There is a species of sovereign power in a single person, which is very proper when applied to a commander-in-chief over an army, so far as relates to the military government of an army, and the condition and purpose of an army constitute the reason why it is so.

In an army every man is of the same profession, that is, he is a soldier, and the commander-in-chief is a soldier too: therefore the knowledge necessary to the exercise of the power is within himself. By understanding what a soldier is, he comprehends the local situation, interest and duty of every man within what may be called, the dominion of his command; and therefore the condition and

circumstances of an army make a fitness for the exer
of the power.

The purpose likewise, or object of an army, is ano
reason: for this power in a commander-in-chief, the
exercised over the army, is not exercised against it;
is exercised through or over the army against the ene
Therefore the enemy, and not the people, is the obje
is directed to. Neither is it exercised over an army
the purpose of raising a revenue from it, but to pro
its combined interest, condense its powers, and give i
pacity for action.

But all these reasons cease when sovereign powe
transferred from the commander of an army to the c
mander of a nation, and entirely loses its fitness when
plied to govern subjects following occupations, as it
erns soldiers following arms. A nation is quite ano
element, and every thing in it differs not only from e
other, but all of them differ from those of an army. A
tion is composed of distinct, unconnected individuals
lowing various trades, employments and pursuits: co
ually meeting, crossing, uniting, opposing and separ
from each other, as accident, interest and circumst
shall direct. An army has but one occupation and
one interest.

Another very material matter in which an army a
nation differ, is that of temper. An army may be sa
have but one temper; for, however the *natural* temp
the persons composing the army may differ *from* e
other, there is a second temper takes place of the fi
a temper formed by discipline, mutuality of habits, u
of objects and pursuits, and the style of military mann
but this can never be the case among all the individ
of a nation. Therefore the fitness, arising from those
cumstances, which disposes an army to the command
single person, and the fitness of a single person for that c
mand, is not to be found either in one or the other, w
we come to consider them as a sovereign and a nation.

Having already shown what a despotic *government*
and how it is administered, I now come to show what
administration of a republic is.

The administration of a republic is supposed to be
rected by certain fundamental principles of right and
tice, from which there cannot, because there ought no
be any deviation: and whenever any deviation appe

there is a kind of stepping out of the republican principle. and an approach towards the despotic one. This administration is executed by a select number of persons, periodically chosen by the people, who act as representatives and in behalf of the whole, and who are supposed to enact the same laws, and pursue the same line of administration, as the people would do were they all assembled together.

The *public good* is to be their object. It is therefore necessary to understand what public good is.

Public good is not a term opposed to the good of individuals; on the contrary, it is the good of every individual collected. It is the good of all, because it is the good of every one: for as the public body is every individual collected, so the public good is the collected good of those individuals.

The foundation-principle of public good is justice, and wherever justice is impartially administered the public good is promoted; for as it is to the good of every man that no injustice be done to him, so likewise it is to his good that the principle which secures him should not be violated in the person of another, because such a violation weakens *his* security, and leaves to chance what ought to be to him a rock to stand on.

But in order to understand more minutely, how the public good is to be promoted, and the manner in which the representatives are to act to promote it, we must have recourse to the original or first principles, on which the people formed themselves into a republic.

When a people agree to form themselves into a republic, (for the word *republic* means the *public good*, or the good of the whole, in contradistinction to the despotic form, which makes the good of the sovereign, or of one man, the only object of the government) when, I say, they agree to do this, it is to be understood, that they mutually resolve and pledge themselves to each other, rich and poor alike, to support and maintain this rule of equal justice among them. They therefore renounce not only the despotic form, but the despotic principle, as well of governing as of being governed by mere will and power, and substitute in its place a government of justice.

By this mutual compact, the citizens of a republic put it out of their power, that is, they renounce, as detestable, the power of exercising, at any future time, any species of despotism over each other, or doing a thing, not right in itself.

because a majority of them may have strength of numbers sufficient to accomplish it.

In this pledge and compact* lies the foundation of the republic: and the security to the rich and the consolation to

* This pledge and compact is contained in the declaration of rights prefixed to the constitution, and is as follows:

I. That all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent and unalienable rights, amongst which are, the enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

II. That all men have a natural and unalienable right to worship almighty God, according to the dictates of their own consciences and understanding: and that no man ought or of right can be compelled to attend any religious worship, or erect or support any place of worship, or maintain any ministry, contrary to, or against, his own free will and consent: nor can any man, who acknowledges the being of a God, be justly deprived or abridged of any civil right as a citizen, on account of his religious sentiments or peculiar mode of religious worship: and that no authority can or ought to be vested in, or assumed by, any power whatever, that shall in any case interfere with, or in any manner control, the right of conscience in the free exercise of religious worship.

III. That the people of this state have the sole, exclusive and inherent right of governing and regulating the internal police of the same.

IV. That all power being originally inherent in, and consequently derived from, the people; therefore all officers of government, whether legislative or executive, are their trustees and servants, and at all times accountable to them.

V. That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection and security of the people, nation or community; and not for the particular emolument or advantage of any single man, family or set of men, who are a part only of that community: and that the community hath an indubitable, unalienable and indefeasible right to reform, alter or abolish government in such manner as shall be by that community judged most conducive to the public weal.

VI. That those who are employed in the legislative and executive business of the state may be restrained from oppression, the people have a right, at such periods as they may think proper, to reduce their public officers to a private station, and supply the vacancies by certain and regular elections.

VII. That all elections ought to be free; and that all free men having a sufficient evident common interest with, and attachment to the community, have a right to elect officers, or to be elected into office.

VIII. That every member of society hath a right to be protected in the enjoyment of life, liberty and property, and therefore is bound to contribute his proportion towards the expense of that protection, and yield his personal service when necessary, or an equivalent thereto; but no part of a man's property can be justly taken from him, or applied to public uses, without his own consent, or that of his legal representatives; nor can any man who is conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms, be justly compelled thereto, if he will pay such equivalent: nor are the people bound by any laws, but such as they have in like manner assented to, for their common good.

IX. That in all prosecutions for criminal offences, a man hath a right to be heard by himself and his counsel, to demand the cause and nature of his accusation, to be confronted with the witnesses, to call for evidence in his favor, and a speedy public trial, by an impartial jury of the country, without the unanimous consent of which jury he cannot be found guilty: nor can he be compelled to give evidence against himself; nor can any man be justly deprived of his liberty, except by the laws of the land, or the judgment of his peers.

X. That the people have a right to hold themselves, their houses, papers, and possessions free from search or seizure; and therefore warrants without

the poor is, that what each man has is his own; that no despotic sovereign can take it from him, and that the common cementing principle which holds all the parts of a republic together, secures him likewise from the despotism of numbers: for despotism may be more effectually acted by many over a few than by one man over all.

Therefore, in order to know how far the power of an assembly, or a house of representatives can act in administering the affairs of a republic, we must examine how far the power of the people extends under the original compact they have made with each other; for the power of the representatives is in many cases less, but never can be greater than that of the people represented; and whatever the people in their mutual original compact have renounced the power of doing towards, or acting over each other, the representatives cannot assume the power to do, because, as I have already said, the power of the representatives cannot be greater than that of the people they represent.

In this place it naturally presents itself that the people in their original compact of equal justice or first principles of a republic, renounced as despotic, detestable and unjust,

oaths or affirmations, first made, affording a sufficient foundation for them, and whereby any officer or messenger may be commanded or required to search suspected places, or to seize any person or persons, his or their property, not particularly described; are contrary to that right, and ought not to be granted.

XI. That in controversies respecting property, and in suits between man and man, the parties have a right to trial by jury, which ought to be held sacred.

XII. That the people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing, and publishing their sentiments; therefore the freedom of the press ought not to be restrained.

XIII. That the people have a right to bear arms for the defence of themselves and the state—and as standing armies in the time of peace, are dangerous to liberty, they ought not to be kept up—and that the military should be kept under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power.

XIV. That a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles, and a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry and frugality are absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty and keep a government free—the people ought therefore to pay particular attention to these points in the choice of officers and representatives, and have a right to exact a due and constant regard to them, from their legislators and magistrates, in the making and executing such laws as are necessary for the good government of the state.

XV. That all men have a natural inherent right to emigrate from one state to another that will receive them, or to form a new state in vacant countries, or in such countries as they can purchase, whenever they think that thereby they may promote their own happiness.

XVI. That the people have a right to assemble together, to consult for their common good, to instruct their representatives, and to apply to the legislature for redress of grievances, by address, petition, or remonstrance.

the assuming a right of breaking and violating their engagements, contracts and compacts with, or defrauding, imposing or tyrannizing over, each other, and therefore the representatives cannot make an act to do it for them, and any such kind of act would be an attempt to depose, not the personal sovereign, but the sovereign principle of the republic, and to introduce despotism in its stead.

It may in this place be proper to distinguish between that species of sovereignty which is claimed and exercised by despotic monarchs, and that sovereignty which the citizens of a republic inherit and retain. The sovereignty of a despotic monarch assumes the power of making wrong right, or right wrong, as he pleases or as it suits him. The sovereignty in a republic is exercised to keep right and wrong in their proper and distinct places, and never to suffer the one to usurp the place of the other. A republic, properly understood, is a sovereignty of justice, in contradistinction to a sovereignty of will.

Our experience in republicanism is yet so slender, that it is much to be doubted, whether all our public laws and acts are consistent with, or can be justified on, the principles of a republican government.

We have been so much habited to act in committees at the commencement of the dispute, and during the interregnum of government, and in many cases since, and to adopt expedients warranted by necessity, and to permit to ourselves a discretionary use of power, suited to the spur and exigency of the moment, that a man transferred from a committee to a seat in the legislature imperceptibly takes with him the ideas and habits he has been accustomed to, and continues to think like a committee-man instead of a legislator, and to govern by spirit rather than by the rule of the constitution and the principles of the republic.

Having already stated that the power of the representatives can never exceed the power of the people whom they represent, I now proceed to examine more particularly, what the power of the representatives is.

It is, in the first place, the power of acting as legislators in making laws—and in the second place, the power of acting in certain cases, as agents or negotiators for the commonwealth, for such purposes as the circumstances of the commonwealth require.

A very strange confusion of ideas, dangerous to the credit, stability, and the good and honor of the common-

wealth, has arisen, by confounding those two distinct powers and things together, and blending every act of the assembly, of whatever kind it may be, under one general name, of *Laws of the Commonwealth*, and thereby creating an opinion (which is truly of the despotic kind) that every succeeding assembly has an equal power over every transaction, as well as law, done by a former assembly.

All laws are acts, but all acts are not laws. Many of the acts of the assembly are acts of agency or negotiation, that is, they are acts of contract and agreement, on the part of the state, with certain persons therein mentioned, and for certain purposes therein recited. An act of this kind, after it has passed the house, is of the nature of a deed or contract, signed, sealed and delivered; and subject to the same general laws and principles of justice as all other deeds and contracts are: for in a transaction of this kind, the state stands as an individual, and can be known in no other character in a court of justice.

By "*laws*," as distinct from the agency transactions, or matters of negotiation, are to be comprehended all those public acts of the assembly or commonwealth, which have a universal operation, or apply themselves to every individual of the commonwealth. Of this kind are the laws for the distribution and administration of justice, for the preservation of the peace, for the security of property, for raising the necessary revenue by just proportions, &c.

Acts of this kind are properly *laws*, and they may be altered, amended and repealed, or others substituted in their places, as experience shall direct, for the better effecting the purpose for which they were intended: and the right and power of the assembly to do this is derived from the right and power which the people, were they all assembled together, instead of being represented, would have to do the same thing: because, in acts or laws of this kind, there is no other party than the public. The law, or the alteration, or the repeal, is for themselves;—and whatever the effects may be, it falls on themselves;—if for the better, they have the benefit of it—if for the worse, they suffer the inconvenience. No violence to any one is here offered—no breach of faith is here committed. It is therefore one of those rights and powers which is within the sense, meaning and limits of the original compact of justice which they formed with each other as the foundation-principle of the

republic, and being one of those rights and powers, volves on their representatives by delegation.

As it is not my intention (neither is it within the assigned to this work) to define every species of wh be called *laws* (but rather to distinguish that part in the representatives act as agents or negotiators for th from the legislative part,) I shall pass on to distingui describe those acts of the assembly which are agency or negotiation, and to show that as they are ent in their nature, construction and operation from lative acts, so likewise the power and authority of sembly over them, after they are passed, is differen

It must occur to every person on the first reflectio the affairs and circumstances of a commonwealth r other business to be done besides that of making law consequently, that the different kinds of business can be classed under one name, or be subject to one a same rule of treatment.—But to proceed—

By agency transactions, or matters of negotiation by the assembly, are to be comprehended all that k public business, which the assembly, as representati the republic, transact in its behalf, with a certain per persons, or part or parts of the republic, for purpose tioned in the act, and which the assembly confirm and on the part of the commonwealth, by affixing to it th of the state.

An act of this kind, differs from a law of the before tioned kind; because here are two parties and the one, and the parties are bound to perform different an tinct parts: whereas, in the before mentioned law, e man's part was the same.

These acts, therefore, though numbered among the are evidently distinct therefrom, and are not of the lative kind. The former are laws for the governme the commonwealth; these are transactions of business, as, selling and conveying an estate belonging to the lic, or buying one; acts for borrowing money, and f with the lender the terms and modes of payment; a agreement and contract, with a certain person or per for certain purposes; and, in short, every act in which parties, the state being one, are particularly mentione described, and in which the form and nature of a bar or contract is comprehended.—These, if for custom uniformity sake we call by the name of *laws*, they are

laws for the government of the commonwealth, but for the government of the contracting parties, as all deeds and contracts are; and are not, properly speaking, acts of the assembly, but joint acts, or acts of the assembly in behalf of the commonwealth on one part, and certain persons therein mentioned on the other part.

Acts of this kind are distinguishable into two classes:—

1st, Those wherein the matters inserted in the act have already been settled and adjusted between the state on one part, and the persons therein mentioned on the other part. In this case the act is the completion and ratification of the contract or matters therein recited. It is in fact a deed signed, sealed and delivered.

2d, Those acts wherein the matters have not been already agreed upon, and wherein the act only holds forth certain propositions and terms to be accepted of and acceded to.

I shall give an instance of each of those acts. First, the state wants the loan of a sum of money—certain persons make an offer to government to lend that sum, and send in their proposals: the government accept these proposals and all the matters of the loan and the payment are agreed on; and an act is passed, according to the usual form of passing acts, ratifying and confirming this agreement. This act is final.

In the second case,—the state, as in the preceding one, wants a loan of money—the assembly passes an act holding forth the terms on which it will borrow and pay: this act has no force, until the propositions and terms are accepted of and acceded to by some person or persons, and when those terms are accepted of and complied with, the act is binding on the state.—But if at the meeting of the next assembly, or any other, the whole sum intended to be borrowed, should not be borrowed, that assembly may stop where they are, and discontinue proceeding with the loan, or make new propositions and terms for the remainder; but so far as the subscriptions have been filled up, and the terms complied with, it is, as in the first case, a signed deed: and in the same manner are all acts, let the matters in them be what they may, wherein, as I have before mentioned, the state on one part, and certain individuals on the other part, are parties in the act.

If the state should become a bankrupt, the creditors, as in all cases of bankruptcy, will be sufferers; they will have

but a dividend for the whole: but this is not a dissolution of the contract, but an accommodation of it, arising from necessity. And so in all cases of this kind, if an inability takes place on either side, the contract cannot be performed, and some accommodation must be gone into or the matter falls through of itself.

It may likewise, though it ought not to happen, that in performing the matters, agreeably to the terms of the act, inconveniences, unforeseen at the time of making the act, may arise to either or both parties: in this case, those inconveniences may be removed by the mutual consent and agreement of the parties, and each find its benefit in so doing: for in a republic it is the harmony of its parts that constitutes their several and mutual good.

But the acts themselves are legally binding, as much as if they had been made between two private individuals. The greatness of one party cannot give it a superiority of advantage over the other. The state, or its representatives, the assembly, has no more power over an act of this kind, after it has passed, than if the state was a private person. It is the glory of a republic to have it so, because it secures the individual from becoming the prey of power, and prevents *might* from overcoming *right*.

If any difference or dispute arise afterwards between the state and the individuals with whom the agreement is made respecting the contract, or the meaning, or extent of any of the matters contained in the act, which may affect the property or interest of either, such difference or dispute must be judged of, and decided upon, by the laws of the land, in a court of justice and trial by jury; that is, by the laws of the land already in being at the time such act and contract was made.—No law made afterwards can apply to the case, either directly, or by construction or implication: for such a law would be a retrospective law, or a law made after the fact, and cannot even be produced in court as applying to the case before it for judgment.

That this is justice, that it is the true principle of republican government, no man will be so hardy as to deny.—If, therefore, a lawful contract or agreement, sealed and ratified, cannot be affected or altered by any act made afterwards, how much more inconsistent and irrational, despotic and unjust would it be, to think of making an act with the professed intention of breaking up a contract already signed and sealed.

That it is possible an assembly, in the heat and indiscretion of party, and meditating on power rather than on the principle by which all power in a republican government is governed, that of equal justice, may fall into the error of passing such an act, is admitted;—but it would be an actless act, an act that goes for nothing, an act which the courts of justice, and the established laws of the land, could know nothing of.

Because such an act would be an act of one party only, not only without, but against the consent of the other; and, therefore, cannot be produced to affect a contract made between the two.—That the violation of a contract should be set up as a justification to the violator, would be the same thing as to say, that a man by breaking his promise is freed from the obligation of it, or that by transgressing the laws he exempts himself from the punishment of them.

Besides the constitutional and legal reasons why an assembly cannot, of its own act and authority, undo or make void a contract made between the state (by a former assembly) and certain individuals, may be added, what may be called, the natural reasons, or those reasons which the plain rules of common sense point out to every man. Among which are the following:

The principals, or real parties, in the contract, are the state and the persons contracted with. The assembly is not a party, but an agent in behalf of the state, authorised and empowered to transact its affairs.

Therefore it is the state that is bound on one part and certain individuals on the other part, and the performance of the contract, according to the conditions of it, devolves on succeeding assemblies, not as principals, but as agents.

Therefore, for the next or any other assembly to undertake to dissolve the state from its obligation is an assumption of power of a novel and extraordinary kind.—It is the servant attempting to free his master.

The election of new assemblies following each other makes no difference in the nature of the thing. The state is still the same state. The public is still the same body. These do not annually expire though the time of an assembly does. These are not new-created every year, nor can they be displaced from their original standing; but are a perpetual, permanent body, always in being and still the same.

But if we adopt the vague, inconsistent idea that every new assembly has a full and complete authority over every act done by the state in a former assembly, and confound together laws, contracts and every species of public business, it will lead us into a wilderness of endless confusion and insurmountable difficulties. It would be declaring an assembly despotic for the time being.—Instead of a government of established principles administered by established rules, the authority of government by being strained so high, would, by the same rule, be reduced proportionably as low, and would be no other than that of a committee of the state acting with discretionary powers for one year. Every new election would be a new revolution, or it would suppose the public of the former year dead and a new public in its place.

Having now endeavored to fix a precise idea to, and distinguish between, legislative acts and acts of negotiation and agency, I shall proceed to apply this distinction to the case now in dispute, respecting the charter of the bank.

The charter of the bank, or what is the same thing, the act for incorporating it, is to all intents and purposes an act of negotiation and contract, entered into, and confirmed between the state on one part, and certain persons mentioned therein on the other part. The purpose for which the act was done on the part of the state is therein recited, *viz.* the support which the finances of the country would derive therefrom. The incorporating clause is the condition or obligation on the part of the state; and the obligation on the part of the bank, is "that nothing contained in that act shall be construed to authorise the said corporation to exercise any powers in this state repugnant to the laws or constitution thereof."

Here are all the marks and evidences of a contract. The parties—the purport—and the reciprocal obligations.

That this is a contract, or a joint act, is evident from its being in the power of either of the parties to have forbidden or prevented its being done. The state could not force the stockholders of the bank to be a corporation, and therefore as their consent was necessary to the making the act, their dissent would have prevented its being made; so on the other hand, as the bank could not force the state to incorporate them, the consent or dissent of the state would have had the same effect to do, or to prevent its being done; and as neither of the parties could make the act alone, for

the same reason can neither of them dissolve it alone: but this is not the case with a law or act of legislation, and therefore the difference proves it to be an act of a different kind.

The bank may forfeit the charter by delinquency, but the delinquency must be proved and established by a legal process in a court of justice and trial by jury; for the state or the assembly, is not to be a judge in its own case, but must come to the laws of the land for judgment; for that which is law for the individual, is likewise law for the state.

Before I enter further into this affair, I shall go back to the circumstances of the country and the condition the government was in, for some time before, as well as at the time it entered into this engagement with the bank, and this act of incorporation was passed: for the government of this state, and I suppose the same of the rest, were then in want of two of the most essential matters which governments could be destitute of—money and credit.

In looking back to those times, and bringing forward some of the circumstances attending them, I feel myself entering on unpleasant and disagreeable ground; because some of the matters which the attack on the bank now make it necessary to state, in order to bring the affair fully before the public, will not add honor to those who have promoted that measure and carried it through the late house of assembly; and for whom, though my own judgment and opinion on the case oblige me to differ from, I retain my esteem, and the social remembrance of times past. But, I trust, those gentlemen will do me the justice to recollect my exceeding earnestness with them, last spring, when the attack on the bank first broke out; for it clearly appeared to me one of those overheated measures, which, neither the country at large, nor their own constituents, would justify them in, when it came to be fully understood; for however high a party measure may be carried in an assembly, the people out of doors are all the while following their several occupations and employments, minding their farms and their business, and take their own time and leisure to judge of public measures; the consequence of which is, that they often judge in a cooler spirit than their representatives act in.

It may be easily recollected that the present bank was preceded by, and rose out of, a former one, called the

Pennsylvania bank, which began a few months before; the occasion of which I shall briefly state.

In the spring of 1780, the Pennsylvania assembly was composed of many of the same members, and nearly all of the same connexion, which composed the late house that began the attack on the bank. I served as clerk of the assembly of 1780, which station I resigned at the end of the year, and accompanied a much lamented friend, the late colonel John Laurens, on an embassy to France.

The spring of 1780 was marked with an accumulation of misfortunes. The reliance placed on the defence of Charleston failed and exceedingly lowered or rather depressed the spirits of the country. The measures of government, from the want of money, means and credit, dragged on like a heavy loaded carriage without wheels, and were nearly got to what a countryman would understand by a dead pull.

The assembly of that year met by adjournment at an unusual time, the 10th of May, and what particularly added to the affliction, was, that so many of the members, instead of spiriting up their constituents to the most nervous exertions, came to the assembly furnished with petitions to be exempt from paying taxes. How the public measures were to be carried on, the country defended, and the army recruited, clothed, fed, and paid, when the only resource, and that not half sufficient, that of taxes, should be relaxed to almost nothing, was a matter too gloomy to look at. A language very different from that of petitions ought at this time to have been the language of every one. A declaration to have stood forth with their lives and fortunes, and a reprobation of every thought of partial indulgence would have sounded much better than petitions.

While the assembly was sitting, a letter from the commander-in-chief was received by the executive council and transmitted to the house. The doors were shut and it fell officially to me to read.

In this letter the naked truth of things was unfolded. Among other informations, the general said, that notwithstanding his confidence in the attachment of the army to the cause of the country, the distresses of it, from the want of every necessary which men could be destitute of, had arisen to such a pitch that the appearance of mutiny and discontent were so strongly marked on the countenance of the army that he dreaded the event of every hour.

When the letter was read I observed a despairing silence in the house. Nobody spoke for a considerable time. At length a member of whose fortitude to withstand misfortunes I had a high opinion, rose: "If," said he, "the account in that letter is a true state of things, and we are in the situation there represented, it appears to me in vain to contend the matter any longer. We may as well give up at first as at last."

The gentleman who spoke next, was (to the best of my recollection) a member from Bucks county, who, in a cheerful note, endeavored to dissipate the gloom of the house—"Well, well," said he, "don't let the house despair, if things are not so well as we wish, we must endeavor to make them better." And on a motion for adjournment, the conversation went no further.

There was now no time to lose, and something absolutely necessary to be done, which was not within the immediate power of the house to do; for what with the depreciation of the currency, the slow operation of taxes, and the petitions to be exempt therefrom, the treasury was moneyless, and the government creditless.

If the assembly could not give the assistance which the necessity of the case immediately required, it was very proper the matter should be known by those who either could or would endeavor to do it. To conceal the information within the house, and not provide the relief which that information required, was making no use of the knowledge and endangering the public cause. The only thing that now remained, and was capable of reaching the case, was private credit, and the voluntary aid of individuals; and under this impression, on my return from the house, I drew out the salary due to me as clerk, inclosed five hundred dollars in a letter to a gentleman in this city, in part of the whole, and wrote fully to him on the subject of our affairs.

The gentleman to whom this letter was addressed is Mr. Blair M'Clenaghan. I mentioned to him, that notwithstanding the current opinion that the enemy were beaten from before Charleston, there were too many reasons to believe the place was then taken and in the hands of the enemy: the consequence of which would be, that a great part of the British force would return, and join that at New-York. That our own army required to be augmented, ten thousand men, to be able to stand against the combined force of the

enemy. I informed Mr. M'Clenaghan of general Washington's letter, the extreme distresses he was surrounded with, and the absolute occasion there was for the citizens to exert themselves at this time, which there was no doubt they would do, if the necessity was made known to them; for that the ability of government was exhausted. I requested Mr. M'Clenaghan to propose a voluntary subscription among his friends, and added, that I had enclosed five hundred dollars as my mite thereto, and that I would increase it as far as the last ability would enable me to go.*

The next day Mr. M'Clenaghan informed me that he had communicated the contents of the letter at a meeting of gentlemen at the coffee-house, and that a subscription was immediately began; that Mr. Robert Morris and himself had subscribed two hundred pounds each, in hard money, and that the subscription was going on very successfully. This subscription was intended as a donation, and to be given in bounties to promote the recruiting service. It is dated June 8th, 1780. The original subscription list is now in my possession—it amounts to four hundred pounds hard money, and one hundred and one thousand three hundred and sixty pounds continental.

While this subscription was going forward, information of the loss of Charleston arrived,† and on a communication from several members of congress to certain gentlemen of this city, of the increasing distresses and dangers then taking place, a meeting was held of the subscribers, and such other gentlemen who chose to attend, at the city tavern. This meeting was on the 17th of June, nine days after the subscriptions had began.

At this meeting it was resolved to open a security-subscription, to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds, Pennsylvania currency, in real money; the subscribers to execute bonds to the amount of their subscriptions, and to form a bank thereon for supplying the army. This being resolved on and carried into execution the plan of the first subscriptions was discontinued, and this extended one established in its stead.

By means of this bank the army was supplied through the campaign, and being at the same time recruited, was

* Mr. M'Clenaghan being now returned from Europe, has my consent to show this letter to any gentleman who may be inclined to see it.

† Colonel Tennant, aid to general Lincoln, arrived the 14th of June, with despatches of the capitulation of Charleston.

enabled to maintain its ground: and on the appointment of Mr. Morris to be superintendent of the finances the spring following, he arranged the system of the present bank, styled the bank of North-America, and many of the subscribers of the former bank transferred their subscriptions into this.

Towards the establishment of this bank, congress passed an ordinance of incorporation December 21st, 1781, which the government of Pennsylvania recognized by sundry matters: and afterwards, on an application from the president and directors of the bank, through the mediation of the executive council, the assembly agreed to, and passed the state act of incorporation April 1st, 1782.

Thus arose the bank—produced by the distresses of the times and the enterprising spirit of patriotic individuals.—Those individuals furnished and risked the money, and the aid which the government contributed was that of incorporating them.—It would have been well if the state had made all its bargains and contracts with as much true policy as it made this: for a greater service for so small a consideration, that only of an act of incorporation, has not been obtained since the government existed.

Having now shown how the bank originated, I shall proceed with my remarks.

The sudden restoration of public and private credit, which took place on the establishment of the bank is an event as extraordinary in itself as any domestic occurrence during the progress of the revolution.

How far a spirit of envy might operate to produce the attack on the bank during the sitting of the late assembly, is best known and felt by those who began or promoted that attack. The bank had rendered services which the assembly of 1780 could not, and acquired an honor which many of its members might be unwilling to own, and wish to obscure.

But surely every government, acting on the principles of patriotism and public good, would cherish an institution capable of rendering such advantages to the community. The establishment of the bank in one of the most trying vicissitudes of the war, its zealous services in the public cause, its influence in restoring and supporting credit, and the punctuality with which all its business has been transacted, are matters, that so far from meriting the treatment it met with from the late assembly, are an honor to the

state, and what the body of her citizens may be proud to own.

But the attack on the bank, as a chartered institution, under the protection of its violators, however criminal it may be as an error of government, or impolitic as a measure of party, is not to be charged on the constituents of those who made the attack. It appears from every circumstance that has come to light, to be a measure which that assembly contrived of itself. The members did not come charged with the affair from their constituents. There was no idea of such a thing when they were elected or when they met. The hasty and precipitate manner in which it was hurried through the house, and the refusal of the house to hear the directors of the bank in its defence, prior to the publication of the repealing bill for public consideration, operated to prevent their constituents comprehending the subject: therefore, whatever may be wrong in the proceedings lies not at the door of the public. The house took the affair on its own shoulders, and whatever blame there is, lies on them.

The matter must have been prejudged and predetermined by a majority of the members out of the house, before it was brought into it. The whole business appears to have been fixed at once, and all reasoning or debate on the case rendered useless.

Petitions from a very inconsiderable number of persons suddenly procured, and so privately done, as to be a secret among the few that signed them, were presented to the house and read twice in one day, and referred to a committee of the house to *inquire* and report thereon. I here subjoin the petition* and the report, and shall exercise the right

* Minutes of the assembly, March 21, 1785. Petitions from a considerable number of the inhabitants of *Chester* county were read, representing that the bank established at *Philadelphia* has fatal effects upon the community; that whilst men are enabled, by means of the bank to receive near three times the rate of common interest, and at the same time receive their money at very short warning, whenever they have occasion for it, it will be impossible for the husbandman or mechanic to borrow on the former terms of legal interest and distant payments of the principal; that the best security will not enable the person to borrow: that experience clearly demonstrates the mischievous consequences of this institution to the fair trader; that impostors have been enabled to support themselves in a fictitious credit, by means of a temporary punctuality at the bank, until they have drawn in their honest neighbors to trust them with their property, or to pledge their credit as sureties, and have been finally involved in ruin and distress; that they have repeatedly seen the stopping of discounts at the bank, operate on the trading part of the community, with a degree of violence scarcely inferior to that of a stagnation of the blood in the human body, hurrying the wretched merchant who hath

and privilege of a citizen in examining their merits, not for the purpose of opposition, but with a design of making an intricate affair more generally and better understood.

debts to pay into the hands of griping usurers: that the directors of the bank may give such preference in trade, by advances of money, to their particular favorites, as to destroy that equality which ought to prevail in a commercial country; that paper money has often proved beneficial to the state, but the bank forbids it, and the people must acquiesce: therefore, and in order to restore public confidence and private security, they pray that a bill may be brought in and passed into a law for repealing the law for incorporating the bank.

March 28. The report of the committee, read March 25, on the petitions from the counties of *Chester* and *Berks*, and the city of *Philadelphia* and its vicinity, praying the act of the assembly, whereby the bank was established at *Philadelphia*, may be repealed, was read the second time as follows—*viz.*

The committee to whom was referred the petitions concerning the bank established at *Philadelphia*, and who were instructed to inquire whether the said bank be compatible with the public safety, and that equality which ought ever to prevail between the individuals of a republic, beg leave to report, that it is the opinion of this committee that the said bank, as at present established, is in every view incompatible with the public safety—that in the present state of our trade, the said bank has a direct tendency to banish a great part of the specie from the country, so as to produce a scarcity of money, and to collect into the hands of the stockholders of the said bank, almost the whole of the money which remains amongst us. That the accumulation of enormous wealth in the hands of a society, who claim perpetual duration, will necessarily produce a degree of influence and power, which cannot be intrusted in the hands of any set of men whatsoever, without endangering the public safety. That the said bank, in its corporate capacity, is empowered to hold estates to the amount of ten millions of dollars, and by the tenor of the present charter, is to exist for ever, without being obliged to yield any emolument to the government, or to be at all dependant upon it. That the great profits of the bank which will daily increase as money grows scarcer, and which already far exceed the profits of European banks, have tempted foreigners to vest their money in this bank, and thus to draw from us large sums for interest.

That foreigners will doubtless be more and more induced to become stockholders, until the time may arrive when this enormous engine of power may become subject to foreign influence; this country may be agitated with the politics of European courts, and the good people of America reduced once more into a state of subordination, and dependance upon some one or other of the European powers. That at best, if it were even confined to the hands of Americans, it would be totally destructive of that equality which ought to prevail in a republic. We have nothing in our free and equal government capable of balancing the influence which this bank must create—and we see nothing, which in the course of a few years, can prevent the directors of the bank from governing Pennsylvania. Already we have felt its influence indirectly interfering in the measures of the legislature. Already the house of assembly, the representatives of the people, have been threatened, that the credit of our paper currency will be blasted by the bank, and if this growing evil continues, we fear the time is not very distant, when the bank will be able to dictate to the legislature, what laws to pass and what to forbear.

Your committee therefore beg leave further to report the following resolution to be adopted by the house—*viz.*

Resolved, that a committee be appointed to bring in a bill to repeal the act of assembly passed the 1st day of April, 1782, entitled, "An act to incorporate the subscribers to the bank of North-America:" and also to repeal one other act of assembly, passed the 18th of March, 1782, entitled, "An act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, bank bills and bank notes of the president, directors and company, of the bank of North-America, and for the other purposes therein mentioned."

So far as my private judgment is capable of comprehending the subject, it appears to me, that the committee were unacquainted with, and have totally mistaken, the nature and business of a bank, as well as the matter committed to them, considered as a proceeding of government.

They were instructed by the house to *inquire* whether the bank established at Philadelphia was compatible with the public safety.

It is scarcely possible to suppose the instructions meant no more than that they were to inquire of one another. It is certain they made no inquiry at the bank, to inform themselves of the situation of its affairs, how they were conducted, what aids it had rendered the public cause, or whether any; nor do the committee produce in their report a single fact or circumstance to show that they made any inquiry at all, or whether the rumors then circulated were true or false; but content themselves with modelling the insinuations of the petitions into a report and giving an opinion thereon.

It would appear from the report, that the committee either conceived that the house had already determined how it would act without regard to the case, and that they were only a committee for form sake, and to give a color of inquiry without making any, or that the case was referred to them, *as law-questions are sometimes referred to law-officers, for an opinion only.*

This method of doing public business serves exceedingly to mislead a country.—When the constituents of an assembly hear that an inquiry into any matter is directed to be made, and a committee appointed for that purpose, they naturally conclude that the inquiry *is made*, and that the future proceedings of the house are in consequence of the matters, facts, and information obtained by means of that inquiry.—But here is a committee of inquiry making no inquiry at all, and giving an opinion on a case without inquiring into the merits of it. This proceeding of the committee would justify an opinion that it was not their wish to *get*, but to *get over* information, and lest the inquiry should not suit their wishes, omitted to make any. The subsequent conduct of the house, in resolving not to hear the directors of the bank on their application for that purpose, prior to the publication of the bill for the consideration of the people, strongly corroborates this opinion: for why should not the house hear them, unless it was apprehensive

that the bank, by such a public opportunity, would produce proofs of its services and usefulness, that would not suit the temper and views of its oppressors?

But if the house did not wish or choose to hear the defence of the bank, it was no reason that their constituents should not. The constitution of this state, in lieu of having two branches of legislature, has substituted, that, "to the end that laws before they are enacted may be more *maturely considered*, and the inconvenience of *hasty determinations* as much as possible prevented, all bills of a public nature shall be printed for the consideration of the people."* The people, therefore, according to the constitution, stand in the place of another house; or, more properly speaking, are a house in their own right. But in this instance the assembly arrogates the whole power to itself, and places itself as a bar to stop the necessary information spreading among the people. The application of the bank to be heard before the bill was published for public consideration had two objects. First, to the house,—and secondly, through the house to the people, who are as another house. It was as a defence in the first instance, and as an appeal in the second. But the assembly absorbs the right of the people to judge; because, by refusing to hear the defence, they barred the appeal. Were there no other cause which the constituents of that assembly had for censuring its conduct, than the exceeding unfairness, partiality, and arbitrariness with which this business was transacted, it would be cause sufficient.

Let the constituents of assemblies differ, as they may, respecting certain peculiarities in the *form* of the constitution, they will all agree in supporting its *principles*, and in reprobating unfair proceedings and despotic measures.—Every constituent is a member of the republic, which is a station of more consequence to him than being a member of a party, and though they may differ from each other in their choice of persons to transact the public business, it is of equal importance to all parties that the business be done on right principles: otherwise our laws and acts, instead of being founded in justice, will be founded in party, and be laws and acts of retaliation; and instead of being a republic of free citizens, we shall be alternately tyrants and slaves. But to return to the report.

* Constitution, sect. 15th.

The report begins by stating that, "The committee to whom was referred the petitions concerning the bank established at Philadelphia, and who were instructed to *inquire* whether the said bank be compatible with the public safety, and that equality which ought ever to prevail between the individuals of a republic, beg leave to report" (not that they have made any *inquiry*, but) that it is the *opinion* of this committee, that the said bank, as at present established, is, in every view, incompatible with the public safety." But why is it so? Here is an opinion unfounded and unwarranted. The committee have begun their report at the wrong end; for an opinion, when given as a matter of judgment, is an action of the mind which follows a fact, but here it is put in the room of one.

The report then says, "that in the present state of our trade, the said bank has a direct tendency to banish a great part of the specie from the country, and to collect into the hands of the stockholders of the bank almost the whole of the money which remains among us."

Here is another mere assertion, just like the former, without a single fact or circumstance to show why it is made or whereon it is founded. Now the very reverse of what the committee asserts is the natural consequence of a bank. Specie may be called the stock in trade of the bank, it is therefore its interest to prevent it from wandering out of the country, and to keep a constant standing supply to be ready for all domestic occasions and demands. Were it true that the bank has a direct tendency to banish the specie from the country, there would soon be an end to the bank; and, therefore, the committee have so far mistaken the matter, as to put their fears in the place of their wishes: for if it is to happen as the committee states, let the bank alone and it will cease of itself, and the repealing act need not have been passed.

It is the interest of the bank that people should keep their cash there, and all commercial countries find the exceeding great convenience of having a general depository for their cash. But so far from banishing it, there are no two classes of people in America who are so much interested in preserving hard money in the country as the bank and the merchant. Neither of them can carry on their business without it. Their opposition to the paper money of the late assembly was because it has a direct effect, as far as it

is able, to banish the specie and that without providing any means for bringing more in.

The committee must have been aware of this, and therefore chose to spread the first alarm, and groundless as it was to trust to the delusion.

As the keeping the specie in the country is the interest of the bank, so it has the best opportunities of preventing its being sent away, and the earliest knowledge of such a design. While the bank is the general depository of cash, no great sums can be obtained without getting it from thence, and as it is evidently prejudicial to its interest to advance money to be sent abroad, because in this case, the money cannot by circulation return again; the bank, therefore, is interested in preventing what the committee would have it suspected of promoting.

It is to prevent the exportation of cash and to retain it in the country that the bank has on several occasions stopped the discounting notes till the danger has been passed.* The first part, therefore, of the assertion, that of banishing the specie, contains an apprehension as needless as it is groundless, and which, had the committee understood, or been the least informed of the nature of a bank, they could

* The petitions say, "That they have repeatedly seen the stopping of discounts at the bank, operate on the trading part of the community, with a degree of violence scarcely inferior to that of a stagnation of the blood in the human body, hurrying the wretched merchant who hath debts to pay into the hands of griping usurers."

As the persons who say or signed this, live somewhere in Chester county, they are not, from situation, certain of what they say. Those petitions have every appearance of being contrived for the purpose of bringing the matter on. The petitions and the report have strong evidence in them of being both drawn up by the same person: for the report is as clearly the echo of the petitions as ever the address of the British parliament was the echo of the king's speech.

Besides the reason I have already given for occasionally stopping discounting notes at the bank, there are other necessary reasons It is for the purpose of settling accounts; short reckonings make long friends. The bank lends its money for short periods, and by that means assists a great many different people: and if it did not sometimes stop discounting as a means of settling with the persons it has already lent its money to, those persons would find a way to keep what they had borrowed longer than they ought, and prevent others being assisted. It is a fact, and some of the committee know it to be so, that sundry of those persons who then opposed the bank acted this part.

The stopping the discounts do not, and cannot, operate to call in the loans sooner than the time for which they were lent, and therefore the charge is false that "it hurries men into the hands of griping usurers:" and the truth is, that it operates to keep them from thence.

If petitions are to be contrived to cover the design of a house of assembly and give a pretence for its conduct, or if a house is to be led by the nose by the idle tale of any fifty or sixty signers to a petition, it is time for the public to look a little closer into the conduct of its representatives.

not have made. It is very probable that some of the opposers of the bank are those persons who have been disappointed in their attempts to obtain specie for this purpose, and now disguise their opposition under other pretences.

I now come to the second part of the assertion, which is, that when the bank has banished a great part of the specie from the country, "it will collect into the hands of the stockholders almost the whole of the money which remains among us." But how, or by what means, the bank is to accomplish this wonderful feat, the committee have not informed us. Whether people are to give their money to the bank for nothing, or whether the bank is to charm it from them as a rattlesnake charms a squirrel from a tree, the committee have left us as much in the dark about as they were themselves.

Is it possible the committee should know so very little of the matter, as not to know that no part of the money which at any time may be in the bank belongs to the stockholders? not even the original capital which they put in is any part of it their own until every person who has a demand upon the bank is paid, and if there is not a sufficiency for this purpose, on the balance of loss and gain, the original money of the stockholders must make up the deficiency.

The money which at any time may be in the bank is the property of every man who holds a bank note, or deposites cash there, or who has a just demand upon it from the city of Philadelphia up to fort Pitt, or to any part of the United States; and he can draw the money from it when he pleases. Its being in the bank, does not in the least make it the property of the stockholders, any more than the money in the state treasury is the property of the state treasurer. They are only stewards over it for those who please to put it, or let it remain there: and, therefore, this second part of the assertion is somewhat ridiculous.

The next paragraph in the report is, "that the accumulation of *enormous wealth* in the hands of a *society* who claim perpetual duration, will necessarily produce a degree of influence and power which cannot be entrusted in the hands of any set of men whatsoever" (the committee I presume excepted) "without endangering the public safety." There is an air of solemn fear in this paragraph which is

something like introducing a ghost in a play to keep people from laughing at the players.

I have already shown that whatever wealth there may be, at any time, in the bank, is the property of those who have demands upon the bank, and not the property of the stockholders. As a society they hold no property, and most probably never will, unless it should be a house to transact their business in, instead of hiring one. Every half year the bank settles its accounts, and each individual stockholder takes his dividend of gain or loss to himself, and the bank begins the next half year in the same manner it began the first, and so on. This being the nature of a bank, there can be no accumulation of wealth among them as a society.

For what purpose the word "*society*" is introduced into the report I do not know, unless it be to make a false impression upon people's minds. It has no connexion with the subject, for the bank is not a society, but a company, and denominated so in the charter. There are several religious societies incorporated in this state, which hold property as the right of those societies, and to which no person can belong that is not of the same religious profession. But this is not the case with the bank. The bank is a company for the promotion and convenience of commerce, which is a matter in which all the state is interested, and holds no property in the manner which those societies do.

But there is a direct contradiction in this paragraph to that which goes before it. The committee, there, accuses the bank of banishing the specie, and here, of accumulating enormous sums of it. So here are two enormous sums of specie; one enormous sum going out, and another enormous sum remaining. To reconcile this contradiction, the committee should have added to their report, *that they suspected the bank had found out the philosopher's stone, and kept it a secret.*

The next paragraph is, "that the said bank, in its corporate capacity, is empowered to hold estates to the amount of ten millions of dollars, and by the tenor of the present charter is to exist for ever, without being obliged to yield any emolument to the government, or be in the least dependant on it."

The committee have gone so vehemently into this business, and so completely shown their want of knowledge in

every point of it, as to make, in the first part of this paragraph, a fear of what, the greater fear is, will never happen. Had the committee known any thing of banking, they must have known, that the objection against banks has been (not that they held great estates, but) that they held none; that they had no real, fixed, and visible property, and that it is the maxim and practice of banks not to hold any.

The honorable chancellor Livingston, late secretary for foreign affairs, did me the honor of showing, and discoursing with me on, a plan of a bank he had drawn up for the state of New-York. In this plan it was made a condition or obligation, that whatever the capital of the bank amounted to in specie, there should be added twice as much in real estates. But the mercantile interest rejected the proposition.

It was a very good piece of policy in the assembly which passed the charter act, to add the clause to empower the bank to purchase and hold real estates. It was as an inducement to the bank to do it, because such estates being held as the property of the bank would be so many mortgages to the public in addition to the money capital of the bank.

But the doubt is that the bank will not be induced to accept the opportunity. The bank has existed five years and has not purchased a shilling of real property: and as such property or estates cannot be purchased by the bank but with the interest money which the stock produces, and as that is divided every half year among the stockholders, and each stockholder chooses to have the management of his own dividend, and if he lays it out in purchasing an estate to have that estate his own private property, and under his own immediate management, there is no expectation, so far from being any fear, that the clause will be accepted.

Where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime; and the committee are criminal in not understanding this subject better. Had this clause not been in the charter, the committee might have reported the want of it as a defect, in not empowering the bank to hold estates as a real security to its creditors: but as the complaint now stands, the accusation of it is, that the charter empowers the bank to *give real security* to its creditors. A complaint never made, heard of, or thought of before.

The second article in this paragraph is, "that the bank, according to the tenor of the present charter, is to exist for ever." Here I agree with the committee, and am glad to find that among such a list of errors and contradictions there is one idea which is not wrong, although the committee have made a wrong use of it.

As we are not to live for ever ourselves, and other generations are to follow us, we have neither the power nor the right to govern them, or to say how they shall govern themselves. It is the summit of human vanity, and shows a covetousness of power beyond the grave, to be dictating to the world to come. It is sufficient that we do that which is right in our own day, and leave them with the advantage of good examples.

As the generations of the world are every day both commencing and expiring, therefore, when any public act of this sort is done it naturally supposes the age of that generation to be then beginning, and the time contained between coming of age, and the natural end of life, in the extent of time it has a right to go to, which may be about thirty years; for though many may die before, others will live beyond; and the mean time is equally fair for all generations.

If it was made an article in the constitution, that all laws and acts should cease of themselves in thirty years, and have no legal force beyond that time, it would prevent their becoming too numerous and voluminous, and serve to keep them within view in a compact compass. Such as were proper to be continued, would be enacted again, and those which were not, would go into oblivion. There is the same propriety that a nation should fix a time for a full settlement of its affairs, and begin again from a new date, as that an individual should; and to keep within the distance of thirty years would be a convenient period.

The British, from the want of some general regulation of this kind, have a great number of obsolete laws; which, though out of use and forgotten, are not out of force, and are occasionally brought up for particular purposes, and innocent, unwary persons trepanned thereby.

To extend this idea still further,—it would probably be a considerable improvement in the political system of nations, to make all treaties of peace for a limited time. It is the nature of the mind to feel uneasy under the idea of a condition perpetually existing over it, and to excite in

itself apprehensions that would not take place were it not from that cause.

Were treaties of peace made for, and renewable every seven or ten years, the natural effect would be, to make peace continue longer than it does under the custom of making peace for ever. If the parties felt or apprehended any inconveniences under the terms already made, they would look forward to the time when they should be eventually relieved therefrom, and might renew the treaty on improved conditions. This opportunity periodically occurring, and the recollection of it always existing, would serve as a chimney to the political fabric, to carry off the smoke and fume of national fire. It would naturally abate, and honorably take off, the edge and occasion for fighting; and however the parties might determine to do it, when the time of the treaty should expire, it would then seem like fighting in cool blood: the fighting temper would be dissipated before the fighting time arrived, and negotiation supply its place. To know how probable this may be, a man need do no more than observe the progress of his own mind on any private circumstance similar in its nature to a public one. But to return to my subject.

To give limitation is to give duration: and though it is not a justifying reason, that because an act or contract is not to last for ever, that it shall be broken or violated to-day, yet, where no time is mentioned, the omission affords an opportunity for the abuse. When we violate a contract on this pretence, we assume a right that belongs to the next generation; for though they, as a following generation, have the right of altering or setting it aside, as not being concerned in the making it, or not being done in their day, we, who made it, have not that right; and, therefore, the committee, in this part of their report, have made a wrong use of a right principle; and as this clause in the charter might have been altered by the consent of the parties, it cannot be produced to justify the violation. And were it not altered there would be no inconvenience from it. The term "for ever" is an absurdity that would have no effect. The next age will think for itself by the same rule of right that we have done, and not admit any assumed authority of ours to encroach upon the system of their day. Our *for ever* ends where their *for ever* begins.

The third article in this paragraph is, that the bank holds its charter "without being obliged to yield any emolument to the government."

Ingratitude has a short memory. It was on the failure of the government to support the public cause, that the bank originated. It stepped in as a support when some of the persons then in the government, and who now oppose the bank, were apparently on the point of abandoning the cause, not from disaffection, but from despair. While the expenses of the war were carried on by emissions of continental money, any set of men, in government, might carry it on. The means being provided to their hands, required no great exertions of fortitude or wisdom: but when this means failed, they would have failed with it, had not a public spirit awakened itself with energy out of doors. It was easy times to the governments while continental money lasted. The dream of wealth supplied the reality of it; but when the dream vanished the government did not awake.

But what right has the government to expect any emolument from the bank? Does the committee mean to set up acts and charters for sale, or what do they mean? Because it is the practice of the British ministry to grind a toll out of every public institution they can get a power over, is the same practice to be followed here?

The war being now ended, and the bank having rendered the service expected, or rather hoped for, from it, the principal public use of it, at this time, is for the promotion and extension of commerce. The whole community derives benefit from the operation of the bank. It facilitates the commerce of the country. It quickens the means of purchasing and paying for country produce, and hastens on the exportation of it. The emolument, therefore, being to the community, it is the office and duty of government to give protection to the bank.

Among many of the principal conveniences arising from the bank, one of them is, that it gives a kind of life to, what would otherwise be, dead money. Every merchant and person in trade, has always in his hands some quantity of cash, which constantly remains with him; that is, he is never entirely without: this remnant money, as it may be called, is of no use to him till more is collected to it.—He can neither buy produce nor merchandize with it, and this being the case with every person in trade, there will

be (though not all at the same time) as many of those sums lying uselessly by, and scattered throughout the city, as there are persons in trade, besides many that are not in trade.

I should not suppose the estimation overrated, in conjecturing, that half the money in the city, at any one time, lies in this manner. By collecting those scattered sums together, which is done by means of the bank, they become capable of being used, and the quantity of circulating cash is doubled, and by the depositors alternately lending them to each other, the commercial system is invigorated; and as it is the interest of the bank to preserve this money in the country for domestic uses only, and as it has the best opportunity of doing so, the bank serves as a sentinel over the specie.

If a farmer, or a miller, comes to the city with produce, there are but few merchants that can individually purchase it with ready money of their own; and those few would command nearly the whole market for country produce: but, by means of the bank, this monopoly is prevented, and the chance of the market enlarged. It is very extraordinary that the late assembly should promote monopolizing; yet such would be the effect of suppressing the bank; and it is much to the honor of those merchants, who are capable, by their fortunes, of becoming monopolizers, that they support the bank. In this case, honor operates over interest. They were the persons who first set up the bank, and their honor is now engaged to support what it is their interest to put down.

If merchants, by this means, or farmers, by similar means, among themselves, can mutually aid and support each other, what has the government to do with it? What right has it to expect emolument from associated industry, more than from individual industry? It would be a strange sort of government, that should make it illegal for people to assist each other, or pay a tribute for doing so.

But the truth is, that the government has already derived emoluments, and very extraordinary ones. It has already received its full share, by the services of the bank during the war; and it is every day receiving benefits, because whatever promotes, and facilitates commerce, serves likewise to promote and facilitate the revenue.

The last article in this paragraph is, "that the bank is not the least dependant on the government."

Have the committee so soon forgotten the principles of republican government and the constitution, or are they so little acquainted with them, as not to know, that this article in their report partakes of the nature of treason? Do they not know, that freedom is destroyed by dependance, and the safety of the state endangered thereby? Do they not see, that to hold any part of the citizens of the state, as yearly pensioners on the favor of an assembly, is striking at the root of free elections?

If other parts of their report discover a want of knowledge on the subject of banks, this shows a want of principle in the science of government.

Only let us suppose this dangerous idea carried into practice, and then see what it leads to. If corporate bodies are, after their incorporation, to be annually dependant on an assembly for the continuance of their charter, the citizens which compose those corporations, are not free. The government holds an authority and influence over them, in a manner different from what it does over other citizens, and by this means destroys that equality of freedom, which is the bulwark of the republic and the constitution.

By this scheme of government any party, which happens to be uppermost in a state, will command all the corporations in it, and may create more for the purpose of extending that influence. The dependant borough towns in England are the rotten part of their government, and this idea of the committee has a very near relation to it.

"If you do not do so and so," expressing what was meant, "take care of your charter," was a threat thrown out against the bank. But as I do not wish to enlarge on a disagreeable circumstance, and hope that what is already said is sufficient to show the anti-constitutional conduct and principles of the committee, I shall pass on to the next paragraph in the report.—Which is—

"That the great profits of the bank, which will daily increase as money grows scarcer, and which already far exceed the profits of European banks, have tempted foreigners to vest their money in this bank, and thus to draw from us large sums for interest."

Had the committee understood the subject, some dependance might be put on their opinion which now cannot. Whether money will grow scarcer, and whether the profits of the bank will increase, are more than the committee know, or are judges sufficient to guess at. The committee are not

so capable of taking care of commerce, as commerce is capable of taking care of itself. The farmer understands farming, and the merchant understands commerce; and as riches are equally the object of both, there is no occasion that either should fear that the other will seek to be poor. The more money the merchant has, so much the better for the farmer who has produce to sell; and the richer the farmer is, so much the better for the merchant, when he comes to his store.

As to the profits of the bank, the stockholders must take their chance for it. It may some years be more and others less, and upon the whole may not be so productive as many other ways that money may be employed. It is the convenience which the stockholders, as commercial men derive from the establishment of the bank, and not the mere interest they receive, that is the inducement to them. It is the ready opportunity of borrowing alternately of each other that forms the principal object: and as they pay as well as receive a great part of the interest among themselves, it is nearly the same thing, both cases considered at once, whether it is more or less.

The stockholders are occasionally depositors and sometimes borrowers of the bank. They pay interest for what they borrow, and receive none for what they deposit; and were a stockholder to keep a nice account of the interest he pays for the one and loses on the other, he would find, at the year's end, that ten per cent. on his stock would probably not be more than common interest on the whole, if so much.

As to the committee complaining "that foreigners by vesting their money in the bank will draw large sums from us for interest," it is like a miller complaining in a dry season, that so much water runs into his dam some of it runs over.

Could those foreigners draw this interest without putting in any capital, the complaint would be well founded; but as they must first put money in before they can draw any out, and as they must draw many years before they can draw even the numerical sum they put in at first, the effect for at least twenty years to come, will be directly contrary to what the committee states: because we draw *capitals* from them and they only *interest* from us, and as we shall have the use of the money all the while it remains with us, the advantage will always be in our favor.—In framing

this part of the report, the committee must have forgotten which side of the Atlantic they were on, for the case would be as they state it if we put money into their bank instead of their putting it into ours.

I have now gone through, line by line, every objection against the bank, contained in the first half of the report; what follows may be called, *The lamentations of the committee*, and a lamentable, pusillanimous, degrading thing it is.—It is a public affront; a reflection upon the sense and spirit of the whole country. I shall give the remainder together, as it stands in the report, and then my remarks.

The lamentations are, "That foreigners will doubtless be more and more induced to become stockholders, until the time may arrive when this *enormous* engine of power may become subject to foreign influence, this country may be agitated by the politics of European courts, and the good people of America reduced once more into a state of subordination and dependance upon some one or other of the European powers. That at best, if it were even confined to the hands of Americans, it would be totally destructive of that equality which ought to prevail in a republic. We have nothing in our free and equal government capable of balancing the influence which this bank must create; and we see nothing which in the course of a few years can prevent the directors of the bank from governing Pennsylvania. Already we have felt its influence indirectly interfering in the measures of the legislature. Already the house of assembly, the representatives of the people, have been threatened, that the credit of our paper currency will be blasted by the bank; and if this growing evil continues, we fear the time is not very distant when the bank will be able to dictate to the legislature, what laws to pass, and what to forbear."

When the sky falls we shall be all killed. There is something so ridiculously grave, so wide of probability, and so wild, confused and inconsistent in the whole composition of this long paragraph, that I am at a loss how to begin upon it.—It is like a drowning man crying fire! fire!

This part of the report is made up of two dreadful predictions. The first is, that if foreigners purchase bank stock, we shall be all ruined:—the second is, that if the Americans keep the bank to themselves, we shall be also ruined.

A committee of fortune-tellers is a novelty in government; and the gentlemen, by giving this specimen of their art, have ingeniously saved their honor on one point, which is, that though the people may say they are not bankers, nobody can say they are not conjurors.—There is, however, one consolation left, which is, that the committee do not know *exactly* how long it may be; so there is some hope that we may all be in heaven when this dreadful calamity happens upon earth.

But to be serious, if any seriousness is necessary on so laughable a subject.—If the state should think there is any thing improper in foreigners purchasing bank stock, or any other kind of stock or funded property (for I see no reason why bank stock should be particularly pointed at) the legislature have authority to prohibit it. It is a mere political opinion that has nothing to do with the charter, or the charter with that; and therefore the first dreadful prediction vanishes.

It has always been a maxim in politics, founded on, and drawn from, natural causes and consequences, that the more foreign countries which any nation can interest in the prosperity of its own, so much the better. Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also; and therefore when foreigners vest their money with us, they naturally invest their good wishes with it; and it is we that obtain an influence over them, not they over us.—But the committee set out so very wrong at first, that the further they travelled, the more they were out of their way; and now they have got to the end of their report, they are at the utmost distance from their business.

As to the second dreadful part, that of the bank overturning the government, perhaps the committee meant that at the next general election themselves might be turned out of it, which has partly been the case; not by the influence of the bank, for it had none, not even enough to obtain the permission of a hearing from government, but by the influence of reason and the choice of the people, who most probably resent the undue and unconstitutional influence which that house and committee were assuming over the privileges of citizenship.

The committee might have been so modest as to have confined themselves to the bank, and not thrown a general odium on the whole country. Before the events can happen which the committee predict, the electors of Pennsyl-

vania must become dupes, dunces and cowards, and therefore, when the committee predict the dominion of the bank they predict the disgrace of the people.

The committee having finished their report, proceed to give their advice, which is,

"That a committee be appointed to bring in a bill to repeal the act of assembly passed the first day of April, 1782, entitled, 'An act to incorporate the subscribers to the bank of North-America,' and also to repeal one other act of the assembly passed the 18th of March, 1782, entitled, 'An act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, bank-bills, and bank-notes of the president, directors and company of the bank of North-America, and for other purposes therein mentioned.'"

There is something in this sequel to the report that is perplexed and obscure.

Here are two acts to be repealed. One is, the incorporating act. The other, the act for preventing and punishing the counterfeiting of the common seal, bank bills, and bank notes of the president, directors and company of the bank of North-America.

It would appear from the committee's manner of arranging them (were it not for the difference of their dates) that the act for punishing the counterfeiting the common seal, &c. of the bank followed the act of incorporation, and that the common seal there referred to is a common seal which the bank held in consequence of the aforesaid incorporating act.—But the case is quite otherwise. The act for punishing the counterfeiting the common seal, &c. of the bank, was passed prior to the incorporating act, and refers to the common seal which the bank held in consequence of the charter of congress, and the style which the act expresses, of president, directors and company of the bank of North-America, is the corporate style which the bank derives under the congress charter.

The punishing act, therefore, hath two distinct legal points. The one is, an authoritative public recognition of the charter of congress. The second is, the punishment it inflicts on counterfeiting.

The legislature may repeal the punishing part, but it cannot undo the recognition, because no repealing act can say that the state has not recognized. The recognition is a mere matter of fact, and no law or act can undo a fact or

put it, if I may so express it, in the condition it was before it existed. The repealing act therefore does not reach the full point the committee had in view; for even admitting it to be a repeal of the state charter, it still leaves another charter recognized in its stead.—The charter of congress, standing merely on itself, would have a doubtful authority but recognition of it by the state gives it legal ability. The repealing act, it is true, sets aside the punishment but does not bar the operation of the charter of congress as a charter recognized by the state, and therefore the committee did their business but by halves.

I have now gone entirely through the report of the committee, and a more irrational, inconsistent, contradictory report will scarcely be found on the journals of any legislature in America.

How the repealing act is to be applied, or in what manner it is to operate, is a matter yet to be determined. For admitting a question of law to arise, whether the charter, which that act attempts to repeal, is a law of the land in the manner which laws of universal operation are; or of the nature of a contract made between the public and the bank (as I have already explained in this work) the repealing act does not and cannot decide the question, because it is the repealing act that makes the question, and its own fate is involved in the decision. It is a question of law and not a question of legislation, and must be decided on in a court of justice and not by a house of assembly.

But the repealing act, by being passed prior to the decision of this point, assumes the power of deciding it, and the assembly in so doing erects itself unconstitutionally into a tribunal of judicature, and absorbs the authority and right of the courts of justice into itself.

Therefore the operation of the repealing act, in its very outset, requires injustice to be done. For it is impossible on the principles of a republican government and the constitution, to pass an act to forbid any of the citizens the right of appealing to the courts of justice on any matter in which his interest or property is affected; but the first operation of this act goes to shut up the courts of justice, and holds them subservient to the assembly. It either commands or influences them not to hear the case, or to give judgment on it on the mere will of one party only.

I wish the citizens to awaken themselves on this subject. Not because the bank is concerned, but because their own constitutional rights and privileges are involved in the event. It is a question of exceeding great magnitude; for if an assembly is to have this power, the laws of the land and the courts of justice are but of little use.

Having now finished with the report, I proceed to the third and last subject—that of paper money.

I remember a German farmer expressing as much in a few words as the whole subject requires: "*money is money, and paper is paper.*"—All the invention of man cannot make them otherwise. The alchymist may cease his labors, and the hunter after the philosopher's stone go to rest, if paper can be metamorphosed into gold and silver, or made to answer the same purpose in all cases.

Gold and silver are the emissions of nature: paper is the emission of art. The value of gold and silver is ascertained by the quantity which nature has made in the earth. We cannot make that quantity more or less than it is, and therefore the value being dependant upon the quantity, depends not on man.—Man has no share in making gold or silver; all that his labors and ingenuity can accomplish is, to collect it from the mine, refine it for use and give it an impression, or stamp it into coin.

Its being stamped into coin adds considerably to its convenience but nothing to its value. It has then no more value than it had before. Its value is not in the impression but in itself. Take away the impression and still the same value remains. Alter it as you will, or expose it to any misfortune that can happen, still the value is not diminished. It has a capacity to resist the accidents that destroy other things. It has, therefore, all the requisite qualities that money can have, and is a fit material to make money of; and nothing which has not all those properties, can be fit for the purpose of money.

Paper, considered as a material whereof to make money has none of the requisite qualities in it. It is too plentiful, and too easily come at. It can be had any where, and for a trifle.

There are two ways in which I shall consider paper.

The only proper use for paper, in the room of money, is to write promisory notes and obligations of payment in specie upon. A piece of paper, thus written and signed, is

worth the sum it is given for, if the person who gives it is able to pay it; because in this case, the law will oblige him. But if he is worth nothing, the paper note is worth nothing. The value, therefore, of such a note, is not in the note itself, for that is but paper and promise, but in the man who is obliged to redeem it with gold or silver.

Paper, circulating in this manner, and for this purpose, continually points to the place and person where, and of whom, the money is to be had, and at last finds its home; and, as it were, unlocks its master's chest and pays the bearer.

But when an assembly undertake to issue paper *as* money, the whole system of safety and certainty is overturned, and property set afloat. Paper notes given and taken between individuals as a promise of payment is one thing, but paper issued by an assembly *as* money is another thing. It is like putting an apparition in the place of a man; it vanishes with looking at, and nothing remains but the air.

Money, when considered as the fruit of many years industry, as the reward of labor, sweat and toil, as the widow's dowry and children's portion, and as the means of procuring the necessaries and alleviating the afflictions of life, and making old age a scene of rest, has something in it sacred that is not to be sported with, or trusted to the airy bubble of paper currency.

By what power or authority an assembly undertakes to make paper money is difficult to say. It derives none from the constitution, for that is silent on the subject. It is one of those things which the people have not delegated, and which, were they at any time assembled together, they would not delegate. It is, therefore, an assumption of power which an assembly is not warranted in, and which may, one day or other, be the means of bringing some of them to punishment.

I shall enumerate some of the evils of paper money and conclude with offering means for preventing them.

One of the evils of paper money is, that it turns the whole country into stock jobbers. The precariousness of its value and the uncertainty of its fate continually operate, night and day, to produce this destructive effect. Having no real value in itself it depends for support upon accident, caprice and party, and as it is the interest of some to depreciate

and of others to raise its value, there is a continual invention going on that destroys the morals of the country.

It was horrid to see, and hurtful to recollect, how loose the principles of justice were let, by means of the paper emissions during the war. The experience then had, should be a warning to any assembly how they venture to open such a dangerous door again.

As to the romantic if not hypocritical tale, that a virtuous people need no gold and silver and that paper will do as well, requires no other contradiction than the experience we have seen. Though some well meaning people may be inclined to view it in this light, it is certain that the sharper always talks this language.

There are a set of men who go about making purchases upon credit, and buying estates they have not wherewithal to pay for; and having done this, their next step is to fill the newspapers with paragraphs of the scarcity of money and the necessity of a paper emission, then to have a legal tender under the pretence of supporting its credit; and when out, to depreciate it as fast as they can, get a deal of it for a little price and cheat their creditors; and this is the concise history of paper money schemes.

But why, since the universal custom of the world has established money as the most convenient medium of traffic and commerce, should paper be set up in preference to gold and silver? The productions of nature are surely as innocent as those of art; and in the case of money, are abundantly, if not infinitely, more so. The love of gold and silver may produce covetousness, but covetousness, when not connected with dishonesty, is not properly a vice. It is frugality run to an extreme.

But the evils of paper money have no end. Its uncertain and fluctuating value is continually awakening or creating new schemes of deceit. Every principle of justice is put to the rack, and the bond of society dissolved: the suppression therefore of paper money might very properly have been put into the act for preventing vice and immorality.

The pretence for paper money has been, that there was not a sufficiency of gold and silver. This, so far from being a reason for paper emissions, is a reason against them.

As gold and silver are not the productions of North-America, they are, therefore, articles of importation; and if we set up a paper manufactory of money, it amounts, as far as it is able, to prevent the importation of hard money, or to send it out again as fast as it comes in; and by following this practice we shall continually banish the specie, till we have none left, and be continually complaining of the grievance instead of remedying the cause.

Considering gold and silver as articles of importation, there will in time, unless we prevent it by paper emissions, be as much in the country as the occasions of it require, for the same reasons there are as much of other imported articles. But as every yard of cloth manufactured in the country occasions a yard the less to be imported, so it is by money, with this difference, that in the one case we manufacture the thing itself and in the other we do not. We have cloth for cloth, but we have only paper dollars for silver ones.

As to the assumed authority of any assembly in making paper money, or paper of any kind, a legal tender, or in other language, a compulsive payment, it is a most presumptuous attempt at arbitrary power. There can be no such power in a republican government: the people have no freedom, and property no security where this practice can be acted: and the committee who shall bring in a report for this purpose, or the member who moves for it, and he who seconds it merit impeachment, and sooner or later may expect it.

Of all the various sorts of base coin, paper money is the basest. It has the least intrinsic value of any *thing* that can be put in the place of gold and silver. A hobnail or a piece of wampum far exceeds it. And there would be more propriety in making those articles a legal tender than to make paper so.

It was the issuing base coin and establishing it as a tender, that was one of the principal means of finally overthrowing the power of the Stuart family in Ireland. The article is worth reciting as it bears such a resemblance to the progress practised on paper money.

"Brass and copper of the basest kind, old cannon, broken bells, household utensils were assiduously collected; and from every pound weight of such vile materials, valued at four-pence, pieces were coined and circulated to the

amount of five pounds nominal value. By the first proclamation they were made current in all payments to and from the king and the subjects of the realm, except in duties on the importation of foreign goods, money left in trust, or due by mortgage, bills or bonds; and James promised that when the money should be decried, he would receive it in all payments or make full satisfaction in gold and silver. The nominal value was afterwards raised by subsequent proclamations, the original restrictions removed, and this base money was ordered to be received in all kinds of payments. As brass and copper grew scarce it was made of still viler materials, of tin and pewter, and old debts of one thousand pounds were discharged by pieces of vile metal, amounting to thirty shillings in intrinsic value."*— Had king James thought of paper, he needed not to have been at the trouble or expense of collecting brass and copper, broken bells and household utensils.

The laws of a country ought to be the standard of equity, and calculated to impress on the minds of the people the moral as well as the legal obligations of reciprocal justice. But tender laws, of any kind, operate to destroy morality, and to dissolve by the pretence of law what ought to be the principle of law to support, reciprocal justice between man and man: and the punishment of a member who should move for such a law ought to be *death*.

When the recommendation of congress, in the year 1780, for repealing the tender laws was before the assembly of Pennsylvania, on casting up the votes, for and against bringing in a bill to repeal those laws, the numbers were equal, and the casting vote rested on the speaker, colonel Bayard. "I give my vote," said he, "for the repeal, from a consciousness of justice; the tender laws operate to establish iniquity by law." But when the bill was brought in, the house rejected it, and the tender laws continued to be the means of fraud.

If any thing had, or could have, a value equal to gold and silver, it would require no tender law: and if it had not that value it ought not to have such a law; and, therefore, all tender laws are tyrannical and unjust, and calculated to support fraud and oppression.

Most of the advocates for tender laws are those who have debts to discharge, and who take refuge in such a

* Leland's History of Ireland, vol. iv. p. 265.

law, to violate their contracts and cheat their creditors: But as no law can warrant the doing an unlawful act, therefore the proper mode of proceeding, should any such laws be enacted in future, will be to impeach and execute the members who moved for and seconded such a bill, and put the debtor and the creditor in the same situation they were in, with respect to each other, before such a law was passed. Men ought to be made to tremble at the idea of such a barefaced act of injustice. It is in vain to talk of restoring credit, or to complain that money cannot be borrowed at legal interest, until every idea of tender laws is totally and publicly reprobated and extirpated from among us.

As to paper money, in any light it can be viewed, it is at best a bubble. Considered as property, it is inconsistent to suppose that the breath of an assembly, whose authority expires with the year, can give to paper the value and duration of gold. They cannot even engage that the next assembly shall receive it in taxes. And by the precedent (for authority there is none) that one assembly makes paper money, another may do the same, until confidence and credit are totally expelled, and all the evils of depreciation acted over again. The amount, therefore, of paper money is this, that it is the illegitimate offspring of assemblies, and when their year expires they leave a vagrant on the hands of the public.

Having now gone through the three subjects proposed in the title to this work, I shall conclude with offering some thoughts on the present affairs of the state.

My idea of a single legislature was always founded on a hope, that whatever personal parties there might be in the state, they would all unite and agree in the general principles of good government—that these party differences would be dropped at the threshold of the statehouse, and that the public good or the good of the whole, would be the governing principle of the legislature within it.

Party dispute, taken on this ground, would only be, who should have the honor of making the laws; not what the laws should be. But when party operates to produce party laws, a single house is a single person, and subject to the haste, rashness and passion of individual sovereignty. At least, it is an aristocracy.

The form of the present constitution is now made to trample on its principles, and the constitutional members are anti-constitutional legislators. They are fond of supporting the form for the sake of the power, and they dethrone the principle to display the sceptre.

The attack of the late assembly on the bank, discovers such a want of moderation and prudence, of impartiality and equity, of fair and candid inquiry and investigation, of deliberate and unbiassed judgment, and such a rashness of thinking and vengeance of power as is inconsistent with the safety of the republic. It was judging without hearing, and executing without trial.

By such rash, injudicious and violent proceedings the interest of the state is weakened, its prosperity diminished and its commerce and its specie banished to other places. Suppose the bank had ~~not been~~ in an immediate condition to have stood such a sudden attack, what a scene of instant distress would the rashness of that assembly have brought upon this city and state. The holders of bank notes, whoever they might be, would have been thrown into the utmost confusion and difficulties. It is no apology to say the house never thought of this, for it was their duty to have thought of every thing.

But by the prudent and provident management of the bank (though unsuspicious of the attack) it was enabled to stand the run upon it without stopping payment a moment, and to prevent the evils and mischiefs taking place which the rashness of the assembly had a direct tendency to bring on; a trial that scarcely a bank in Europe, under a similar circumstance, could have withstood.

I cannot see reason sufficient to believe that the hope of the house to put down the bank was placed on the withdrawing the charter, so much as on the expectation of producing a bankruptcy of the bank, by starting a run upon it. If this was any part of their project it was a very wicked one, because hundreds might have been ruined to gratify a party spleen.

But this not being the case, what has the attack amounted to, but to expose the weakness and rashness, the want of judgment as well as justice, of those who made it, and to confirm the credit of the bank more substantially than it was before?

The attack, it is true, has had one effect, which is not in the power of the assembly to remedy; it has banished

many thousand hard dollars from the state. By the means of the bank, Pennsylvania had the use of a great deal of hard money belonging to citizens of other states, and that without any interest, for it laid here in the nature of a deposite, the depositors taking bank notes in its stead. But the alarm called those notes in, and the owners drew out their cash.

The banishing the specie served to make room for the paper money of the assembly, and we have now paper dollars where we might have had silver ones. So that the effect of the paper money has been to make less money in the state than there was before. Paper money is like dram-drinking, it relieves for a moment by a deceitful sensation, but gradually diminishes the natural heat, and leaves the body worse than it found it. Were not this the case, and could money be made of paper at pleasure, every sovereign in Europe would be as rich as he pleased. But the truth is, that it is a bubble and the attempt vanity. Nature has provided the proper materials for money, gold and silver, and any attempt of ours to rival her is ridiculous.

But to conclude. If the public will permit the opinion of a friend who is attached to no party, and under obligations to none, nor at variance with any, and who through a long habit of acquaintance with them has never deceived them, that opinion shall be freely given.

The bank is an institution capable of being made exceedingly beneficial to the state, not only as the means of extending and facilitating its commerce, but as a means of increasing the quantity of hard money in the state. The assembly's paper money serves directly to banish or crowd out the hard, because it is issued *as* money and put in the place of hard money. But bank notes are of a very different kind, and produce a contrary effect. They are promissory notes payable on demand, and may be taken to the bank and exchanged for gold or silver without the least ceremony or difficulty.

The bank, therefore, is obliged to keep a constant stock of hard money sufficient for this purpose; which is what the assembly neither does, nor can do by their paper; because the quantity of hard money collected by taxes into the treasury is trifling compared with the quantity that circulates in trade and through the bank.

The method, therefore, to increase the quantity of hard money would be to combine the security of the government and the bank into one. And instead of issuing paper money that serves to banish the specie, to borrow the sum wanted of the bank in bank notes, on the condition of the bank exchanging those notes at stated periods and quantities, with hard money.

Paper issued in this manner, and directed to this end, would, instead of banishing, work itself into, gold and silver; because it will then be both the advantage and duty of the bank, and of all the mercantile interest connected with it, to procure and import gold and silver from any part of the world, to give in exchange for the notes.—The English bank is restricted to the dealing in no other articles of importation than gold and silver, and we may make the same use of our bank if we proceed properly with it.

Those notes will then have a double security, that of the government and that of the bank: and they will not be issued *as* money, but as hostages to be exchanged for hard money, and will, therefore, work the contrary way to what the paper of the assembly, uncombined with the security of the bank, produces: and the interest allowed the bank will be saved to government by a saving of the expenses and charges attending paper emissions.

It is, as I have already observed in the course of this work, the harmony of all the parts of a republic, that constitutes their several and mutual good. A government, that is constructed only to govern, is not a republican government. It is combining authority with usefulness that in a great measure distinguishes the republican system from others.

Paper money appears, at first sight, to be a great saving, or rather that it costs nothing; but it is the dearest money there is. The ease with which it is emitted by an assembly at first, serves as a trap to catch people in at last. It operates as an anticipation of the next year's taxes.—If the money depreciates, after it is out, it then, as I have already remarked, has the effect of fluctuating stock, and the people become stock-jobbers to throw the loss on each other. If it does not depreciate, it is then to be sunk by taxes at the price of *hard money;* because the same quantity of produce, or goods, that would procure a paper dollar to pay taxes with, would procure a silver one for the

same purpose. Therefore in any case of paper money it is dearer to the country than hard money, by all the expense which the paper, printing, signing and other attendant charges come to, and at last goes into the fire.

Suppose one hundred thousand dollars in paper money to be emitted every year by the assembly, and the same sum to be sunk every year by taxes, there will then be no more than one hundred thousand dollars out at any one time. If the expense of paper and printing, and of persons to attend the press while the sheets are striking off, signers, &c. be five per cent. it is evident that in the course of twenty years emissions, the one hundred thousand dollars will cost the country two hundred thousand dollars. Because the papermaker's and printer's bills, and the expense of supervisors and signers, and other attendant charges, will in that time amount to as much as the money amounts to; for the successive emissions are but a re-coinage of the same sum.

But gold and silver require to be coined but once, and will last an hundred years, better than paper will one year, and at the end of that time be still gold and silver. Therefore the saving to government, in combining its aid and security with that of the bank in procuring hard money, will be an advantage to both, and to the whole community.

The case to be provided against, after this, will be, that the government do not borrow too much of the bank, nor the bank lend more notes than it can redeem; and, therefore, should any thing of this kind be undertaken the best way will be to begin with a moderate sum, and observe the effect of it. The interest given the bank operates as a bounty on the importation of hard money, and which may not be more than the money expended in making paper emissions.

But nothing of this kind, nor any other public undertaking, that requires security and duration beyond the year, can be gone upon under the present mode of conducting government. The late assembly, by assuming a sovereign power over every act and matter done by the state in former assemblies, and thereby setting up a precedent of overhauling and overturning, as the accident of elections shall happen or party prevail, have rendered government incompetent to all the great objects of the state. They have eventually reduced the public to an annual body like

themselves; whereas the public are a standing, permanent body, holding annual elections.

There are several great improvements and undertakings, such as inland navigation, building bridges, opening roads of communication through the state, and other matters of a public benefit, that might be gone upon, but which now cannot, until this governmental error or defect is remedied. The faith of government, under the present mode of conducting it, cannot be relied on. Individuals will not venture their money, in undertakings of this kind, on an act that may be made by one assembly and broken by another. When a man can say that he cannot trust the government, the importance and dignity of the public is diminished, sapped and undermined; and, therefore, it becomes the public to restore their own honor, by setting these matters to rights.

Perhaps this cannot be effectually done until the time of the next convention, when the principles, on which they are to be regulated and fixed, may be made a part of the constitution.

In the mean time the public may keep their affairs in sufficient good order, by substituting prudence in the place of authority, and electing men into the government, who will at once throw aside the narrow prejudices of party, and make the good of the whole the ruling object of their conduct. And with this hope, and a sincere wish for their prosperity, I close my book.

END OF DISSERTATIONS ON GOVERNMENT, &c.

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·IOMAS PAINE.

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ON THE

CONSTRUCTION OF IRON BRIDGES.

AS bridges, and the method of constructing them, are becoming objects of great importance throughout the United States, and as there are at this time proposals for a bridge over the Delaware, and also a bridge beginning to be erected over the Schuylkill at Philadelphia, I present the public with some account of the construction of iron bridges.

The following memoir on that subject, written last winter at the federal city, was intended to be presented to congress. But as the session would necessarily be short, and as several of its members would be replaced by new elections at the ensuing session, it was judged better to let it lie over. In the mean time, on account of the bridges now in contemplation, or began, I give the memoir the opportunity of appearing before the public and the persons concerned in those works.

THOMAS PAINE.

Bordentown, New-Jersey, June, 1803.

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

I HAVE deposited in the office of the secretary of state, and under the care of the patent office, two models of iron bridges; the one in paste-board, the other cast in metal. As they will show by inspection the manner of constructing iron bridges, I shall not take up the time of congress with a description of them.

My intention in presenting this memoir to congress, is to put the country in possession of the means and of the right of making use of the construction freely; as I do not intend to take any patent right for it.

As America abounds in rivers that interrupt the land communication, and as by violence of floods, and the breaking up of the ice in the spring, the bridges depending for support from the bottom of the river, are frequently carried away, I turned my attention, after the the revolutionary

war was over, to find a method of constructing an arch, that might, without rendering the height inconvenient or the ascent difficult, extend at once from shore to shore, over rivers of three, four, or five hundred feet and probably more.

The principle I took to begin with, and work upon, was that the small segment of a large circle was preferable to the great segment of a small circle. The appearance of such arches and the manner of forming and putting the parts together admit of many varieties, but the principle will be the same in all. The bridge architects that I conversed with in England denied the principle, but it was generally supported by mathematicians, and experiment has now established the fact.

In 1786, I made three models, partly at Philadelphia, but mostly at Bordentown in the state of New-Jersey. One model was in wood, one in cast iron, and one in wrought iron connected with blocks of wood, representing cast iron blocks, but all on the same principle, that of the small segment of a large circle.

I took the last mentioned one with me to France, in 1787, and presented it to the academy of sciences at Paris for their opinion of it. The academy appointed a committee of three of their own body—Mons. Le Roy, the abbe Bossou, and Mons. Borda. The first was an acquaintance of Dr. Franklin, and of Mr. Jefferson, then minister at Paris. The two others were celebrated as mathematicians. I presented it as a model for a bridge of a single arch of 400 feet span over the river Schuylkill at Philadelphia. The committee brought in a report which the academy adopted—that an arch on the principle and construction of the model, in their opinion, might be extended 400 feet, the extent proposed.

In September of the same year, I sent the model to Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society in England, and soon after went there myself.

In order to ascertain the truth of the principle on a larger scale, than could be shown by a portable model of five or six feet in length, I went to the iron foundery of Messrs. Walkers, at Rotherham, county of Yorkshire, in England, and had a complete rib of 90 feet span and 5 feet of height from the cord line to the centre of the arch, manufactured and erected. It was a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter; and until this was done, no experiment

on a circle of such an extensive diameter had ever been made in architecture, or the practicability of it supposed.

The rib was erected between a wall of a furnace belonging to the iron works, and the gable end of a brick building, which served as butments. The weight of iron in the rib, was three tons, and we loaded it with double its weight in pig iron. I wrote to Mr. Jefferson, who was then at Paris, an account of this experiment; and also Sir Joseph Banks in London, who in his answer to me says—"I look for many other bold improvements from your countrymen, the Americans, who think with vigor, and are not fettered with the trammels of science before they are capable of exerting their mental faculties to advantage." On the success of this experiment, I entered into an agreement with the iron-founders at Rotherham to cast and manufacture a complete bridge, to be composed of five ribs of 210 feet span, and 5 feet of height from the cord line, being a segment of a circle 610 feet diameter, and send it to London, to be erected as a specimen for establishing a manufactory of iron bridges, to be sent to any part of the world.

The bridge was erected at the village of Paddington, near London, but being in a plain field where no advantage could be taken of butments without the expense of building them, as in the former case, it served only as a specimen of the practicability of a manufactory of iron bridges. It was brought by sea, packed in the hold of a vessel, from the place where it was made; and after standing a year was taken down without injury to any of its parts, and might be erected any where else.

At this time my bridge operations became suspended. Mr. Edmund Burke published his attack on the French revolution and the system of representative government, and in defence of government by hereditary succession, a thing which is in its nature an absurdity because it is impossible to make wisdom hereditary; and therefore, so far as wisdom is necessary in a government, it must be looked for where it can be found. Sometimes in one family; sometimes in another. History informs us that the son of Solomon was a fool. He lost ten tribes out of twelve.* There are those in later times who lost thirteen.

The publication of this work by Mr. Burke, absurd in its principles and outrageous in its manner, drew me, as I

* 2 Chron. chap. 10.

have said, from my bridge operations, and my time became employed in defending a system then established and operating in America, and which I wished to see peaceably adopted in Europe—I therefore ceased my work on the bridge to employ myself on the more necessary work, *Rights of Man*, in answer to Mr. Burke.

In 1792, a convention was elected in France for the express purpose of forming a constitution on the authority of the people, as had been done in America, of which convention I was elected a member. I was at this time in England, and knew nothing of my being elected till the arrival of the person who was sent officially to inform me of it.

During my residence in France, which was from 1792 to 1802, an iron bridge of 236 feet span and 34 of height from the cord line, was erected over the river Wear at the town of Sunderland, in the county of Durham in England. It was done chiefly at the expense of the two members in parliament for that county, Milbanke and Burdon.

It happened that a very intimate friend of mine, Sir Robert Smith (who was also an acquaintance of Mr. Monroe, the American minister, and since of Mr. Livingston) was then at Paris. He had been a colleague in parliament, with Milbanke, and supposing that the persons who constructed the iron bridge at Sunderland, had made free with my model, which was at the iron works where the Sunderland bridge was cast, he wrote to Milbanke on the subject, and the following is that gentleman's answer.

"With respect to the iron bridge over the river Wear at Sunderland, it certainly is a work well deserving admiration, both for its structure and utility, and I have good grounds for saying that the first idea was suggested by Mr. Paine's bridge exhibited at Paddington. What difference there may be in some part of the structure, or in the proportion of wrought and cast iron, I cannot pretend to say, Burdon having undertaken to build the bridge, in consequence of his having taken upon himself whatever the expense might be beyond between three and four thousand pounds sterling, subscribed by myself and some other gentlemen. But whatever the mechanism might be, it did not supersede the necessity of a centre.* (The writer has here confounded a

* It is the technical term, meaning the boards and numbers which form the arch upon which the permanent materials are laid; when a bridge is finished the workmen say they are ready to strike centre, that is to take down the scaffolding.

centre with a scaffolding) which centre (continues the writer) was esteemed a very ingenious piece of workmanship, and taken from a plan sketched out by Mr. Nash an architect of great merit who had been consulted in the outset of the business, when a bridge of stone was in contemplation.

"With respect therefore to any gratuity to Mr. Paine, though ever so desirous of rewarding the labors of an ingenious man, I do not feel, how, under the circumstances already described, I have it in my power, having had nothing to do with the bridge after the payment of my subscription, Mr. Burdon then becoming accountable for the whole. But if you can point out any mode, according to which it would be in my power to be instrumental in procuring him any compensation for the advantages the public may have derived from his ingenious model, from which certainly the outline of the bridge at Sunderland was taken, be assured it will afford me very great satisfaction.*

RA. MILBANKE."

The year before I left France the government of that country had it in contemplation to erect an iron bridge over the river Seine at Paris. As all edifices of public construction came under the cognizance of the minister of the interior,—(and as their plan was to erect a bridge of five iron arches of one hundred feet span each, instead of passing the river with a single arch, and which was going backward in practice, instead of forward, as there was already an iron arch of 230 feet in existence) I wrote the minister of the interior, the citizen Chaptal, a memoir on the construction of iron bridges. The following is his answer.

The minister of the interior to the citizen Thomas Paine.

I have received, citizen, the observations that you have been so good as to address to me upon the construction of iron bridges. They will be of the greatest utility to us, when the new kind of construction goes to be executed for the first time. With pleasure, I assure you, citizen, that you have rights of more than one kind to the thankfulness of nations, and I give you, cordially, the particular expression of my esteem.†

CHAPTAL.

* The original is in my possession.

† The original, in French, is in my possession.

A short time before I left France, a person came to me from London with plans and drawings for an iron bridge of one arch over the river Thames at London, of 600 feet span and sixty feet of height from the cord line. The subject was then before a committee of the house of commons, but I know not the proceedings thereon.

As this new construction of an arch for bridges, and the principles on which it is founded, originated in America, as the documents I have produced sufficiently prove, and is becoming an object of importance to the world and to no part of it more than to our own country, on account of its numerous rivers, and as no experiment has been made in America to bring it into practice, further than on the model I have executed myself, and at my own expense, I beg leave to submit a proposal to congress on the subject, which is,

To erect an experiment rib of about 400 feet span, to be the segment of a circle of at least 1000 feet diameter, and to let it remain exposed to public view that the method of constructing such arches may be generally known.

It is an advantage peculiar to the construction of iron bridges, that the success of an arch of a given extent and height, can be ascertained without being at the expense of building the bridge; which is, by the method I propose, that of erecting an experiment rib on the ground where advantage can be taken of two hills for butments.

I began in this manner with the rib of 90 feet span, and 5 feet of height, being a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter. The undertakers of the Sunderland bridge began in the same manner. They contracted with the iron-founder for a single rib, and finding it to answer, had five more manufactured like it, and erected into a bridge consisting of six ribs, the experiment rib being one. But the Sunderland bridge does not carry the principle much further into practice than had been done by the rib of 90 feet span and 5 feet in height, being, as before said, a segment of a circle of 410 feet diameter; the Sunderland bridge being 206 feet span and 34 feet of height, gives the diameter of the circle of which it is a segment, to be 444 feet, within a few inches, which is but a larger segment of a circle of 30 feet more diameter.

The construction of those bridges does not come within the line of any established practice of business. The stone architect can derive but little from the theory or practice

of his art that enters into the construction of an iron bridge; and the iron-founder, though he may be expert in moulding and casting the parts, when the models are given him, would be at a loss to proportion them unless he was acquainted with all the lines and properties belonging to a circle.

If it should appear to congress that the construction of iron bridges will be of utility to the country, and they should direct that an experiment rib be made for that purpose, I will furnish the proportions for the several parts of the work, and give my attendance to superintend the erection of it.

But, in any case, I have to request, that this memoir may be put on the journals of congress, as an evidence hereafter, that this new method of constructing bridges originated in America.

THOMAS PAINE.

Federal city, Jan. 3, 1803.

N. B. The two models mentioned in the memoir, will, I expect, arrive at Philadelphia by the next packet from the federal city, and will remain for some time in Mr. Peale's museum.

USEFUL AND ENTERTAINING HINTS.*

"The real value of a thing,
Is as much money as 'twill bring."

In the possession of the Philadelphia Library Company is a cabinet of fossils,† with several specimens of earth, clay, sand, &c. with some account of each, and where brought from.

I have always considered these kind of researches as productive of many advantages, and in a new country they

* Published in the Pennsylvania magazine, Feb. 1775.

† In the catalogue it is called a collection of American fossils, &c. but a considerable part of them are foreign ones. I presume that the collector, in order to judge the better of such as he might discover here, made first a collection of such foreign ones whose value were known, in order to compare by; as his design seems rather bent towards discovering the treasures of America, than merely to make a collection.

are particularly so. As subjects for speculation, they afford entertainment to the curious; but as objects of utility they merit a closer attention. The same materials which delight the fossilist, enrich the manufacturer and the merchant. While the one is scientifically examining their structure and composition, the others, by industry and commerce, are transmuting them to gold. Possessed of the power of pleasing, they gratify on both sides; the one contemplates their *natural* beauties in the cabinet, the others, their *re-created* one in the coffer.

'Tis by the researches of the virtuoso that the hidden parts of the earth are brought to light, and from his discoveries of its qualities, the potter, the glassmaker, and numerous other artists, are enabled to furnish us with their productions. Artists, considered *merely* as such, would have made but a slender progress, had they not been led on by the enterprising spirit of the curious. I am unwilling to dismiss this remark without entering my protest against that unkind, ungrateful and impolitic custom of ridiculing unsuccessful experiments; and informing those unwise or overwise pasquinaders, that half the felicities they enjoy, sprung originally from generous curiosity.

Were a man to propose, or set out to bore his lands, as a carpenter does a board, he might probably bring on himself a shower of witticisms; and though he could not be jested at for building castles in the air, yet many magnanimous laughs might break forth at his expense, and vociferously predict the explosion of a mine in his subterraneous pursuits. I am led to this reflection by the present domestic state of America, because it will unavoidably happen, that before we can arrive at that perfection of things which other nations have acquired, many hopes will fail, many whimsical attempts will become fortunate, and many reasonable ones end in air and expense. The degree of improvement which America is already arrived at, is unparalleled and astonishing, but 'tis miniature to what she will one day boast of, if heaven continue her happiness. We have nearly one whole region yet unexplored; I mean the internal region of the earth. By industry and tillage we have acquired a considerable knowledge of what America will produce, but very little of what it contains. The bowels of the earth have been only slightly inquired into: we seem to content ourselves with such parts of it as are absolutely necessary, and cannot well be

imported, as brick, stone, &c. but have gone very little further, except in the article of iron. The glass and the pottery manufactures are yet very imperfect, and will continue so, 'till some curious researcher finds out the proper material.

Copper, lead, and tin, articles valuable both in their simple state, and as being the component parts of other metals (*viz.* brass and pewter) are at present but little known throughout the continent in their mineral form: yet I doubt not, but very valuable mines of them, are daily travelled over in the western parts of America. Perhaps a few feet of surface conceal a treasure sufficient to enrich a kingdom.

The value of the interior part of the earth, like ourselves, cannot be judged certainly of by the surface; neither do the corresponding strata lie with the unvariable order of the colors of the rainbow, and if they ever did, which I do not believe, age and misfortune have now broken in upon their union; earthquakes, deluges, and volcanoes have so disunited and re-united them, that in their present state they appear like a world in ruins—yet the ruins are beautiful; the caverns, museums of antiquity.

Though nature is gay, polite, and generous abroad, she is sullen, rude, and niggardly at home: return the visit, and she admits you with all the suspicion of a miser, and all the reluctance of an antiquated beauty retired to replenish her charms. Bred up in antediluvian notions, she has not yet acquired the European taste of receiving visitants in her dressing-room: she locks and bolts up her private recesses with extraordinary care, as if not only resolved to preserve her hoards, but to conceal her age, and hide the remains of a face that was young and lovely in the days of Adam. He that would view nature in her undress, and partake of her internal treasures, must proceed with the resolution of a robber, if not a ravisher. She gives no invitation to follow her to the cavern—the external earth makes no proclamation of the interior stores, but leaves to chance and industry, the discovery of the whole. In such gifts as nature can annually re-create, she is noble and profuse, and entertains the whole world with the interest of her fortunes; but watches over the capital with the care of a miser. Her gold and jewels lie concealed in the earth in caves of utter darkness; and hoards of wealth, heaps upon heaps, mould in the chests, like the riches of

a necromancer's cell. It must be very pleasant to an adventurous speculist to make excursions into these Gothic regions; and in his travels he may possibly come to a cabinet locked up in some rocky vault, whose treasures shall reward his toil, and enable him to shine on his return, as splendidly as nature herself.

By a small degree of attention to the order and origin of things, we shall perceive, that though the surface of the earth produces us the necessaries of life, yet 'tis from the mine we extract the conveniences thereof. Our houses would diminish to wigwams, furnished in the Indian style, and ourselves resemble the building, were it not for the ores of the earth. Agriculture and manufactures would wither away for want of tools and implements, and commerce stand still for want of materials. The beasts of the field would elude our power, and the birds of the air get beyond our reach. Our dominion would shrink to a narrow circle; and our mind itself, partaking of the change, would contract its prospects, and lessen into almost animal instinct. Take away but the single article of iron, and half the felicities of life fall with it. Little as we may prize this common ore, the loss of it would cut deeper than the use of it: and by the way of laughing off misfortunes 'tis easy to prove, by this method of investigation, that *an iron age is better than a golden one.*

Since so great a portion of our enjoyments is drawn from the mine, it is certainly an evidence of our prudence to inquire and know what our possessions are. Every man's landed property extends to the surface of the earth. Why then should he sit down contented with a part, and practise upon his estate those fashionable follies in life, which prefer the superfice to the solid? Curiosity alone, should the thought occur conveniently, would move an active mind to examine (though not at the bottom) at least to a considerable depth.

The propriety and reasonableness of these internal inquiries are continually pointed out to us by numberless occurrences. Accident is almost every day turning out some new secret from the earth. How often has the ploughshare or the spade broken open a treasure, which for ages, perhaps for ever, had lain but just beneath the surface? And though every estate have not mines of gold or silver, yet they may contain some strata of valuable earth, proper for manufactures; and if they have not those, there is a great

probability of their having chalk, marl, or some rich soil proper for manure, which only requires to be removed to the surface.

I have been informed of some land in England being raised to four times its former value by the discovery of a chalk or marl pit, in digging a hole to fix a post in; and in embanking a meadow in the Jerseys, the laborers threw out with the soil, a fine blue powdered earth, resembling indigo, which, when mixed with oil, was used for paint.—I imagine this vein is now exhausted.

Many valuable ores, clays, &c. appear in such rude forms in their natural state, as not even to excite curiosity, much less attention. A true knowledge of their different value can only be obtained by experiment: as soil proper for manure they may be judged of by the planter; but as matter, they come under the inquiry of the philosopher—this leads me to reflect with inexpressible pleasure, on the numberless benefits arising to a community, by the institution of societies for promoting useful knowledge.

The American Philosophical Society, like the Royal Society in England, by having public spirit for its support, and public good for its object, is a treasure we ought to glory in. Here the defective knowledge of the individual is supplied by the common stock. Societies, without endangering private fortunes, are enabled to proceed in their inquiries by analysis and experiment: but individuals are seldom furnished with conveniences for so doing, and generally rest their opinion on reasonable conjecture.

I presume that were samples of differernt soils from different parts of America, presented to the society for their inspection and examination, it would greatly facilitate our knowledge of the internal earth, and give a new spring both to agriculture and manufactures.

These hints are not intended to lament any loss of time, or remissness in the pursuit of useful knowledge, but to furnish matter for future studies; that while we glory in what we are, we may not neglect what we are to be.

Of the present state we may justly say, that no nation under heaven ever struck out in so short a time, and with so much spirit and reputation, into the labyrinth of art and science; and that not in the acquisition of knowledge only, but in the happy advantages flowing from it. The world does not at this day exhibit a parallel, neither can history produce its equal. ATLANTICUS.

ON THE UTILITY OF MAGAZINES.*

In a country whose reigning character is the love of science, it is somewhat strange that the channels of communication should continue so narrow and limited. The weekly papers are at present the only vehicles of public information. Convenience and necessity prove that the opportunities of acquiring and communicating knowledge, ought always to enlarge with the circle of population. America has now outgrown the state of infancy: her strength and commerce make large advances to manhood, and science in all its branches has not only blossomed, but even ripened on the soil. The cottages as it were of yesterday have grown to villages, and villages to cities; and while proud antiquity, like a skeleton in rags, parades the streets of other nations, their genius as if sickened and disgusted with the phantom, comes hither for recovery.

The present enlarged and improved state of things gives every encouragement which the editor of a new magazine can reasonably hope for. The failure of former ones cannot be drawn as a parallel now. Change of times adds propriety to new measures. In the early days of colonization, when a whisper was almost sufficient to have negotiated all our internal concerns, the publishing even of a newspaper would have been premature. Those times are past; and population has established both their use and their credit. But their plan being almost wholly devoted to news and commerce, affords but a scanty residence to the muses. Their path lies wide of the field of science, and has left a rich and unexplored region for new adventurers.

It has always been the opinion of the learned and curious, that a magazine when properly conducted, is the nursery of genius; and by constantly accumulating new matter, becomes a kind market for wit and utility. The opportunities which it affords to men of abilities to communicate their studies, kindle up a spirit of invention and emulation. An unexercised genius soon contracts a kind of

* First published in the Pennsylvania Magazine, Jan. 1775.

mossiness, which not only checks its growth, but abates its natural vigor. Like an untenanted house it falls into decay, and frequently ruins the possessor.

The British magazines at their commencement, were the repositories of ingenuity: they are now the retailers of tale and nonsense. From elegance they sunk to simplicity, from simplicity to folly, and from folly to voluptuousness. The Gentleman's, the London, and the Universal Magazines, bear yet some marks of their originality; but the Town and Country, the Covent-Garden, and Westminster are no better than incentives to profligacy and dissipation. They have added to the dissolution of manners, and supported Venus against the muses.

America yet inherits a large portion of her first-imported virtue. Degeneracy is here almost a useless word. Those who are conversant with Europe, would be tempted to believe that even the air of the Atlantic disagrees with the constitution of foreign vices; if they survive the voyage, they either expire on their arrival, or linger away in an incurable consumption. There is a happy something in the climate of America, which disarms them of all their power both of infection and attraction.

But while we give no encouragement to the importation of foreign vices, we ought to be equally careful not to create any. A vice begotten might be worse than a vice imported. The latter, depending on favor, would be a sycophant; the other, by pride of birth would be a tyrant: to the one we should be dupes, to the other slaves.

There is nothing which obtains so general an influence over the manners and morals of a people as the press; from *that*, as from a fountain, the streams of vice or virtue are poured forth over a country: and of all publications, none are more calculated to improve or infect than a periodical one. All others have their rise and their exit; but *this* renews the pursuit. If it has an evil tendency, it debauches by the power of repetition; if a good one, it obtains favor by the gracefulness of soliciting it. Like a lover, it courts its mistress with unabated ardor, nor gives up the pursuit without a conquest.

The two capital supports of a magazine are utility and entertainment: the first is a boundless path, the other an endless spring. To suppose that arts and sciences are exhausted subjects, is doing them a kind of dishonor. The divine mechanism of creation reproves such folly, and shows

us by comparison, the imperfection of our most refined inventions. I cannot believe that this species of vanity is peculiar to the present age only. I have no doubt but that it existed before the flood, and even in the wildest ages of antiquity. 'Tis folly we have inherited, not created; and the discoveries which every day produce, have greatly contributed to dispossess us of it. Improvement and the world will expire together: and till that period arrives, we may plunder the mine, but can never exhaust it! That "*we have found out every thing*," has been the motto of every age. Let our ideas travel a little into antiquity, and we shall find larger portions of it than now: and so unwilling were our ancestors to descend from this mountain of perfection, that when any new discovery exceeded the common standard, the discoverer was believed to be in alliance with the devil. It was not the ignorance of the age only, but the vanity of it, which rendered it dangerous to be ingenious. The man who first planned and erected a tenable hut, with a hole for the smoke to pass, and the light to enter, was perhaps called an able architect, but he who first improved it with a chimney, could be no less than a prodigy; yet had the same man been so unfortunate as to have embellished it with glass windows, he might probably have been burnt for a magician. Our fancies would be highly diverted could we look back, and behold a circle of original Indians haranguing on the sublime perfection of the age: yet 'tis not impossible but future times may exceed us almost as much as we have exceeded them.

I would wish to extirpate the least remains of this impolitic vanity. It has a direct tendency to unbrace the nerves of invention, and is peculiarly hurtful to young colonies. A magazine can never want matter in America, if the inhabitants will do justice to their own abilities. Agriculture and manufactures owe much of their improvement in England, to hints first thrown out in some of their magazines. Gentlemen whose abilities enabled them to make experiments, frequently chose that method of communication, on account of its convenience. And why should not the same spirit operate in America? I have no doubt of seeing, in a little time, an American magazine full of more useful matter than I ever saw an English one: because we are not exceeded in abilities, have a more extensive field for inquiry, and, whatever may be our political state, *our happiness will always depend upon ourselves.*

Something useful will always arise from exercising the invention, though perhaps, like the witch of Endor, we shall raise up a being we did not expect. We owe many of our noblest discoveries more to accident than wisdom. In quest of a pebble we have found a diamond, and returned enriched with the treasure. Such happy accidents give additional encouragement to the making experiments; and the convenience which a magazine affords, of collecting and conveying them to the public, enhances their utility. Where this opportunity is wanting, many little inventions, the forerunners of improvement, are suffered to expire on the spot that produced them; and as an elegant writer beautifully expresses on another occasion,

"They waste their sweetness on the desert air."

In matters of humor and entertainment there can be no reason to apprehend a deficiency. Wit is naturally a volunteer, delights in action, and under proper discipline is capable of great execution. 'Tis a perfect master in the art of bush-fighting; and though it attacks with more subtilty than science, has often defeated a whole regiment of heavy artillery.—Though I have rather exceeded the line of gravity in this description of wit, I am unwilling to dismiss it without being a little more serious.—'Tis a qualification which, like the passions, has a natural wildness that requires governing. Left to itself it soon overflows its banks, mixes with common filth, and brings disrepute on the fountain. We have many valuable springs of it in America, which at present run in purer streams, than the generality of it in other countries. In France and Italy, 'tis froth highly fomented: in England it has much of the same spirit, but rather a browner complexion. European wit is one of the worst articles we can import. It has an intoxicating power with it, which debauches the very vitals of chastity, and gives a false coloring to every thing it censures or defends. We soon grow fatigued with the excess, and withdraw like gluttons sickened with intemperance. On the contrary, how happily are the sallies of innocent humor calculated to amuse and sweeten the vacancy of business! We enjoy the harmless luxury without surfeiting, and strengthen the spirits by relaxing them.

The press has not only a great influence over our manners and morals, but contributes largely to our pleasures; and a magazine when properly enriched, is very conven-

iently calculated for this purpose. Volumnious works weary the patience, but here we are invited by conciseness and variety. As I have formerly received much pleasure from perusing these kind of publications, I wish the *present* success; and have no doubt of seeing a proper diversity blended so agreeably together, as to furnish out an *olio* worthy of the company for whom it is designed.

I consider a magazine as a kind of bee-hive, which both allures the swarm, and provides room to store their sweets. Its division into cells, gives every bee a province of its own; and though they all produce honey, yet perhaps they differ in their taste for flowers, and extract with greater dexterity from one than from another. Thus, we are not all *philosophers*, all *artists*, nor all *poets*.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.